

DUNLOP

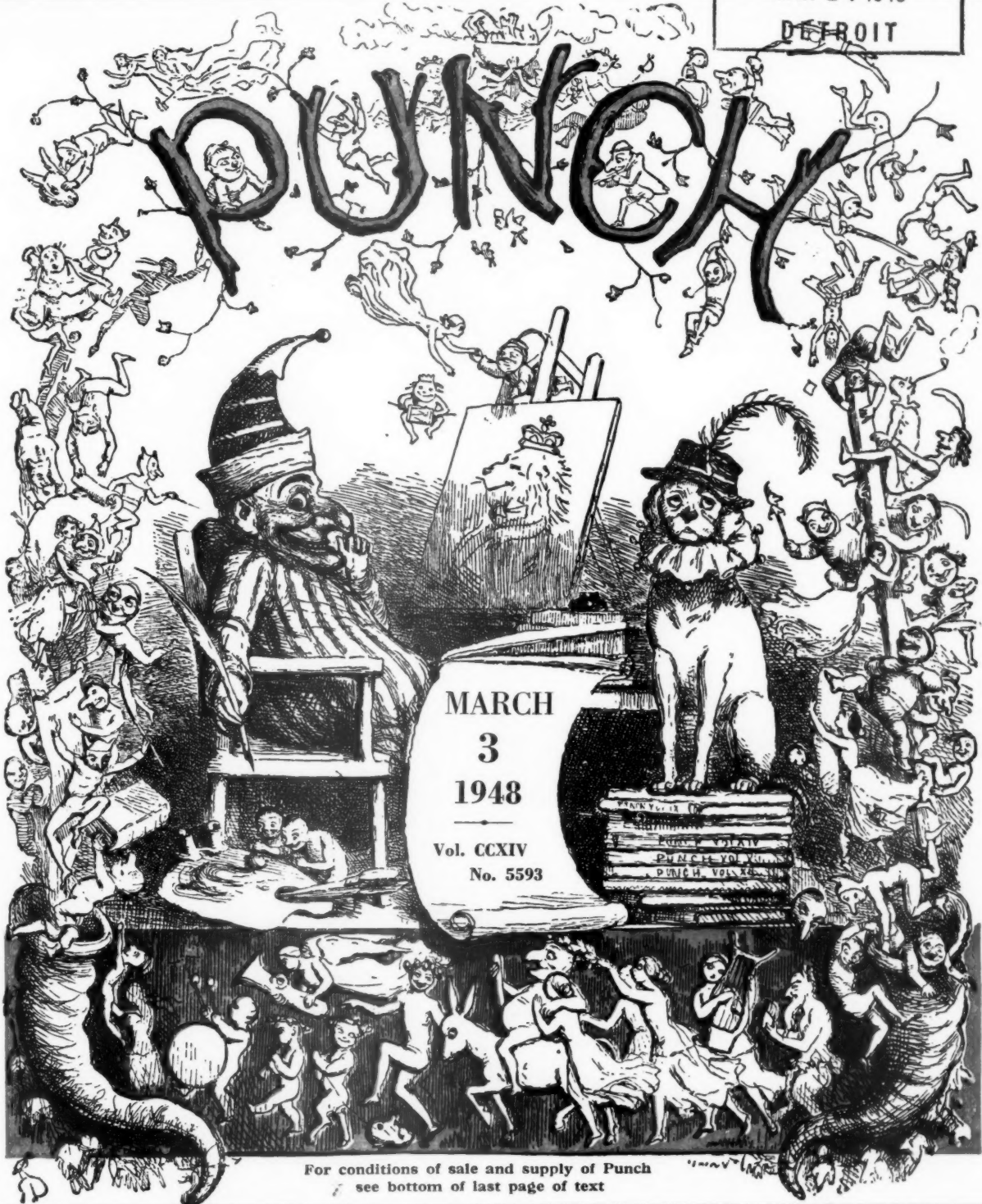


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MAR 17 1948

DETROIT



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

Fit **Triplex**—and be safe
Rec'd

Hus-s-sh!

KEEP IT DARK

THIS is for your private ear. Yes, that one. Because a missing component has been arriving in some quantity in recent weeks, we have been able to complete quite a number of two Murphy models which have been in short supply. This has happened exactly at the time when a lot of people have spent all their money (Christmas and all that). So for the next few weeks there is a very good chance that you could walk into your Murphy Dealer and say "I want a B119 (or an A122)" — and get it!

A122 A.C. Mains only. Price £29.6.8 including Purchase Tax.
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... confirms your good judgment and taste, is your guarantee that only the very finest of matched skins — soft, lustrous, long-wearing skins — have been used in the fur coat of your choice.

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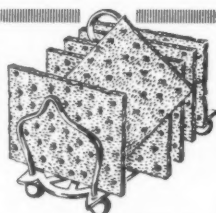


Vita-Weat is good to eat • So

crisp and nice to crunch • Wheat

in its most delicious form • Try

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Craven 'A'
CORK-TIPPED

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MADE SPECIALLY TO PREVENT SORE THROATS



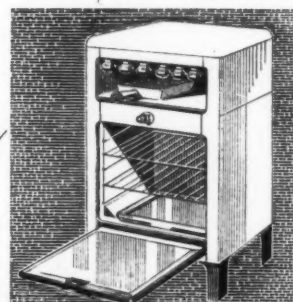
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THE CLEAN LINE GAS
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EXCLUSIVE PARKINSON
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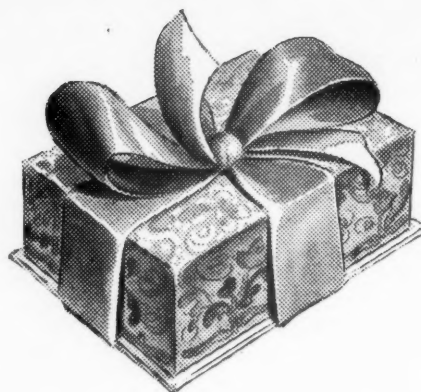
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No. 13

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it is some folk's
wisdom. And good
fishermen are usually
good smokers who
are sufficient unto
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pouch or case is well
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Sobranie*. That float
may never bob, there
may be never a sug-
gestion of a rise, yet
the angler who
smokes pure Turkish
has had a good day;
he is that modern
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SELF-RAISING flour



- still the surest!

There's food as well as
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In these days growing children depend upon getting the right food extras. After seventy years 'Kepler' is still the finest "food extra" you can buy — so start the children on 'Kepler' as soon as you can. They all love its sweet, malty flavour. Your chemist has 'Kepler.'

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COD LIVER OIL WITH MALT EXTRACT
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Sole Agents for Gt. Britain & British Empire-CARTAUX (LONDON) LTD. 44 CHANCERY LANE, W.C.2



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The row of spikes set at an angle on the inner edge of the sole remain firmly embedded and retain their grip when the foot is tilted at the end of the stroke.

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Not too little..



not too much..



but just right
IF IT'S

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SHAVING STICK**

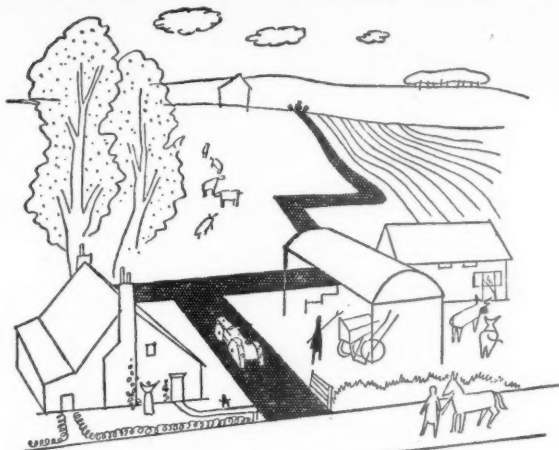
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This Farm Road surfaced with COLAS is clean, dust-free and good to look at. COLAS can be laid in almost any weather without skilled labour or special apparatus. Resistant to wear and weather it lasts for years without attention.

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No, they're not talking about the Hunt. They're discussing Burrough's Gin. People who know just how good really good gin is, always try for Burrough's because it is *triple-distilled*. It is this extra refinement that makes Burrough's Gin soft, smooth and clean to the palate.

Delicious taken plain, Burrough's Gin always "keeps its place" in even the most delicate cocktails. Maximum price 30/- per bottle.

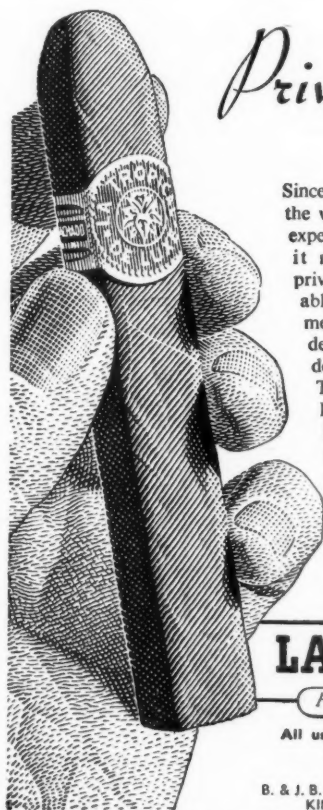


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IT IS TRIPLE DISTILLED!

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Since 1834, we have imported the world's finest cigars. This experience has brought with it many privileges. For privilege it is, indeed, to be able to smoke and recommend to others a cigar so delicate in flavour and so delightfully mild as La Tropical de Luxe. Knowing that this cigar has met the demand of critical taste for over 70 years we can, and do, (as sole importers of this brand in the United Kingdom) recommend it unreservedly.

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Faultless Jamaican Cigars

All usual sizes in boxes of 25 and 50 from 58/9 upwards.

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How fortunate that you can bestow, at such low cost, a present of such high intrinsic and lasting value as a Smiths Clock. This happy fact is solving the 'gift problem' everywhere today. Obtainable from your local Smiths Stockists.

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'SECTRIC' AND HANDWOUND



SCM 129 F

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It is interested in its customers, in their affairs and in their business ventures; it is ready, by direct assistance and friendly counsel, to help those affairs forward, for it recognises that the prosperity of the Bank is to be found in the prosperity of its customers. It is, therefore, good business to keep in touch with your Bank. The Manager at any branch of the Westminster Bank will be glad to discuss with you any problem in which the services of the Bank can usefully be employed.

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1848 A CENTURY OF BOOKSTALL SERVICE 1948



"everybody knows where to
find the right books..."

A WONDERLAND OF BOOKS

"You're laughing" said the Duchess. "I'm not," said Alice, turning her face the other way, "but I can't help thinking how funny you look." The Duchess frowned fiercely. "Sensible people should find something better to laugh at" she said. "Sensible people often do," replied Alice, "if they read the right books." "But WHERE" roared the Duchess "would they find the right books?" Alice thought that was a very silly question, because everybody knows where to find the right books...

W. H. SMITH & SON, LTD.

1500 BOOKSHOPS AND BOOKSTALLS THROUGHOUT ENGLAND AND WALES

With acknowledgments to Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

By appointment:
MOTOR MOWER
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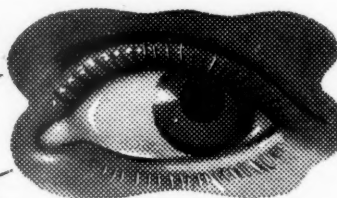
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Whitworth Works,
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FIRST AID FOR EYE TROUBLES



EYE FATIGUE

In cases of eye fatigue caused by overwork — by glaring or insufficient light — by irritation, dust or fumes — OPTREX brings immediate relief at each application.

SMARTING AND INFLAMMATION

Normally, inflammation of the eyes will vanish after a day or two if the eyes are bathed thrice daily with OPTREX.

STYES

Styes, which are small swellings in the eyelid similar to a boil, are brought about by contact with dirty objects, germ-laden dust, etc. Bathing with OPTREX brings quick relief.

ENCRUSTED LASHES

For speedy relief of crusts on the lashes and inflammation of the rims of the eyelids, bathe the eyes three times a day with OPTREX.

COLDS AND INFLUENZA

OPTREX not only calms the congestion and irritation caused to the eyes, but in many cases seems to bring relief from the unpleasant effects of the cold itself. Try it and see.

Under existing conditions, many kinds of irritation can attack tired eyes. Prompt treatment with OPTREX can usually eliminate the possibility of serious trouble — and here are some handy first-aid tips. But remember — at the first sign of serious trouble, professional advice should be sought.

OPTREX

The famous Optrex 'exclusive design' eye baths are on sale once more. Price 10d., including purchase tax. Optrex eye compresses are also obtainable.

the

EYE LOTION





PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXIV No. 5593

March 3 1948

Charivaria

MR. SHINWELL'S new name for the A.T.S. was recently disclosed. No reciprocal announcement has been made.

A traveller declares that the Isle of Wight looked so wild and isolated last week, with its blanket of snow, that one almost expected to see polar bears and penguins. Or, at the very least, a few South American admirals.

A manuscript stolen from an author's house was returned to him by post. He regards this as distinctly encouraging. On all previous occasions he has had to provide stamped addressed envelopes.

Seagulls in East Anglia are reported to have invaded kitchens and pantries in their search for food during the recent cold spell. Birds can be almost human at times.



Not all the Americans who are expected to visit London this year will be coming to fulfil music-hall engagements.

"My charwoman rang up to tell me she could not come as she was having a permanent wave," says a correspondent. This is only one of the advantages a housewife enjoys through being a telephone subscriber.

Brightness Falls from the Air.

"WOMEN'S BRIGHT HOUR.—On Tuesday at the Gospel Hall a service of song, entitled 'Frozen to death,' was rendered . . ."
"Isle of Wight County Press."

According to a G.P.O. official many people use post-offices to write business letters, pay bills and so on. It should be easy to cross cheques with post-office nibs.



We understand that now more elastic is available this material will be used at railway refreshment buffets to extend the range of teaspoons tied to the counter.

"JET FLIES IN THE STRATOSPHERE"

North-country paper.

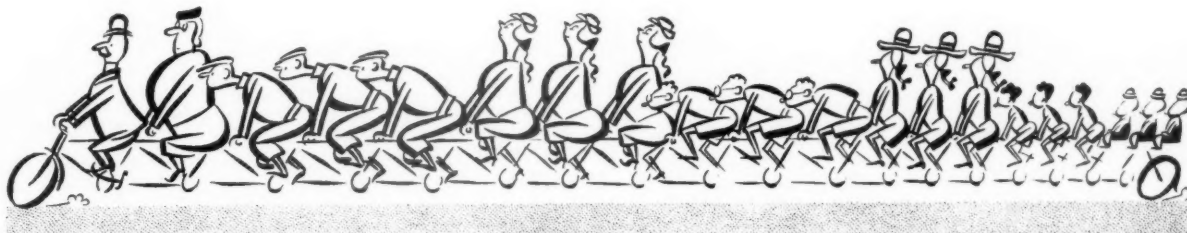
Is this the shape of stings to come?

"DANES TO SEND BRITON 17,000,000 EGGS A WEEK"
Chalked newspaper placard.
As the lucky recipient remarked, "Well, I'll be bound!"

The commissionaire at a London cinema was pardonably annoyed last week when a small boy inquired why he wasn't with his colleagues off Deception Island.

It is understood that the Opposition are to press for losses on nationalized undertakings to be frozen.

The father of eighteen children has been summoned for riding a bicycle without a light. And not, as might have been supposed, for causing a crowd to collect.



No Grumbler I

HOW doubly golden is the morning
When all night long with eyelids shut
We brooded on the broadcast warning,
And waked to find the gas uncut!

Look on the bright side always, brothers:
Be sure that if he failed to come
For us, ah! yes, but not for others
The plumber has arrived to plumb.

Steep is the pathway of my travel,
Yet up the slippery slopes I pace
Two men to-day were sprinkling gravel,
And hurled a spadeful in my face.

Let not the hours be recollected
When Fate and Fortune seemed to scowl,
But rather those—the unexpected—
When life was not completely foul.

Somewhere a lonely soul that waited
Through spells of frost and sleet and rain
Has seen—and at the platform stated—
Arrive the miracle of a train,

Has felt the thrill and wondered whether
The world had solace more complete
Than dangling on a piece of leather
With no one trampling on his feet.

Not idle moments were we wasting
That after many a piteous plea
Brought us a luncheon faintly tasting
Of something it was meant to be.

And not eternally, though sadly
In quest of drinks drawn on and on,
The way-worn traveller, bursting madly
Into the bar, has found them gone.

Spring comes to earth, though not the dollar,
The emerald shines upon the larch,
The violet blooms again, the collar
Suspects the unfamiliar starch.

And turn the atlas page with patience
And you shall find—perchance—and brag
Some spots in it where thankful nations
Fail to insult the British flag. EVOE.

Gluttony

NEXT week I have to go to Wurminster on business, and I shall stay the night at the Lion and Unicorn Hotel. When I come back I shall tell all my friends what a marvellous dinner they serve at the Lion and Unicorn Hotel, and I shall also describe the breakfast in luscious detail.

I have not yet made up my mind what I shall tell them I have had for dinner, but I think it will be roast lamb, baked potatoes, and mint sauce. The portion of lamb will be so large as entirely to obscure the surface of the plate, and it will be about half an inch thick, but so tenderly cooked that it melts like butter in the mouth. The potatoes, of which the supply will be quite unlimited, will be entirely free of the curious black lumps found in the ordinary modern potato, and they will be beautifully browned. As for the mint sauce, it will be real mint sauce made from real mint.

To follow the lamb and baked potatoes and mint sauce there will be apple pudding, the pudding part being rich and suety and the apples erring perhaps a little on the side of sweetness. With the apple pudding there will be a large jug of real cream. When all this has been stowed away I shall undo a couple of waistcoat buttons and sit back, and the elderly and respectful waiter will come up and murmur deferentially "Cheese, sir?"

I shall look at him reprovingly. "Surely you are aware," I shall say, "that one is not permitted pudding and cheese?"

He will flinch slightly, and lower his voice.

"I know," he will say, "but at the Lion and Unicorn we always use our discretion, and we bought rather too much Camembert last week. To-night it is at its creamy best, but to-morrow it will be a little far gone . . . I feel certain Mr. Strachey would not wish it to be wasted."

I shall give in. I shall eat the cheese, and I shall consume with it nine biscuits and about an ounce of best butter.

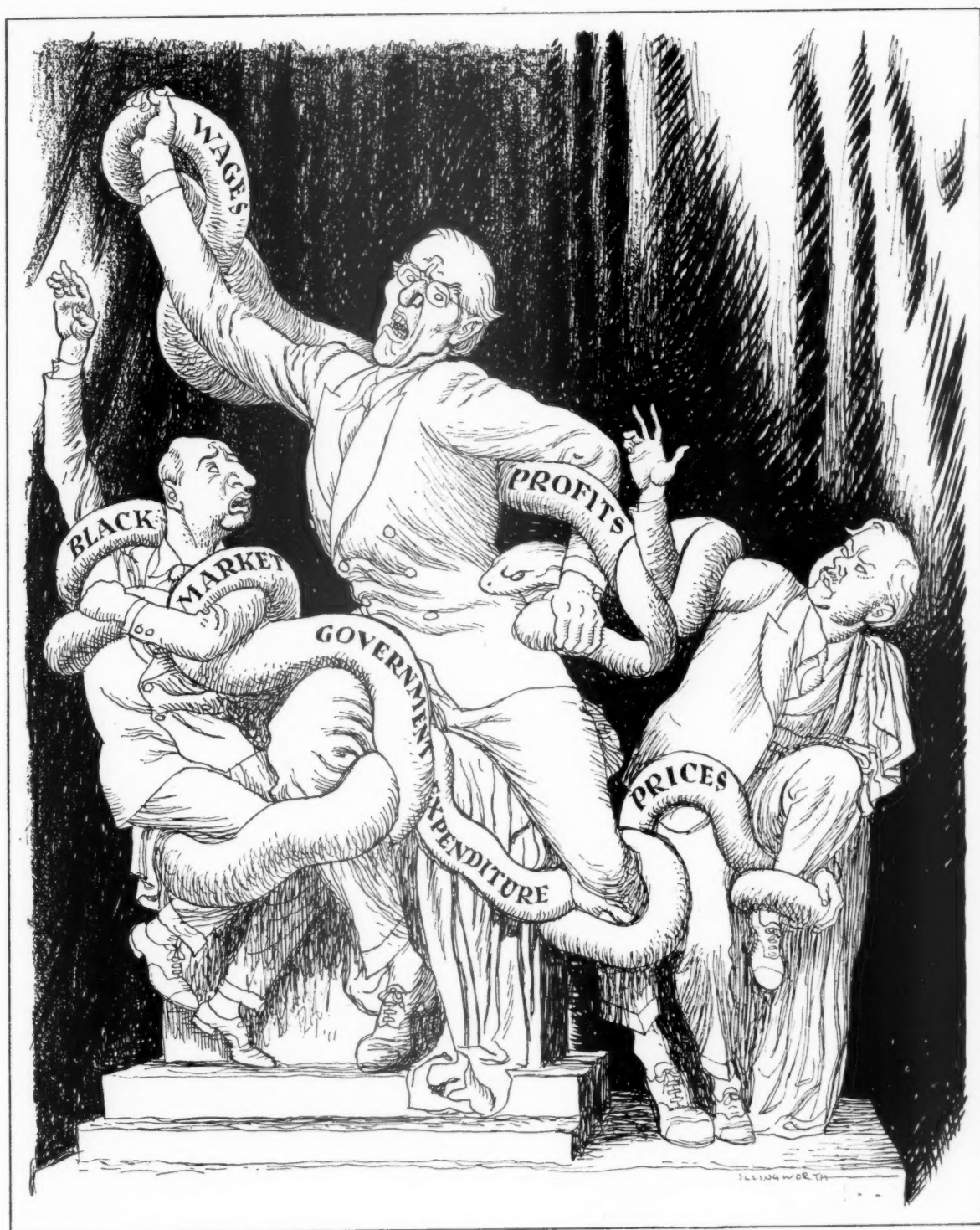
For breakfast I was at first inclined to stick to eggs-and-bacon. Two eggs and a slice of bacon so long that the ends draped over opposite edges of the plate. Then the thought of a mixed grill came to me, and I decided that a mixed grill it must be. Nothing very elaborate, just a fine rasher of crisp bacon, one egg, a couple of small kidneys, a bit of liver, and a small cutlet, with a couple of tomatoes. The waiter could apologize for mushrooms being out of season when he brought the huge pot of home-made marmalade, the crisp rolls, and the enormous lumps of butter.

These two meals I shall describe in sickening detail to all my friends. I

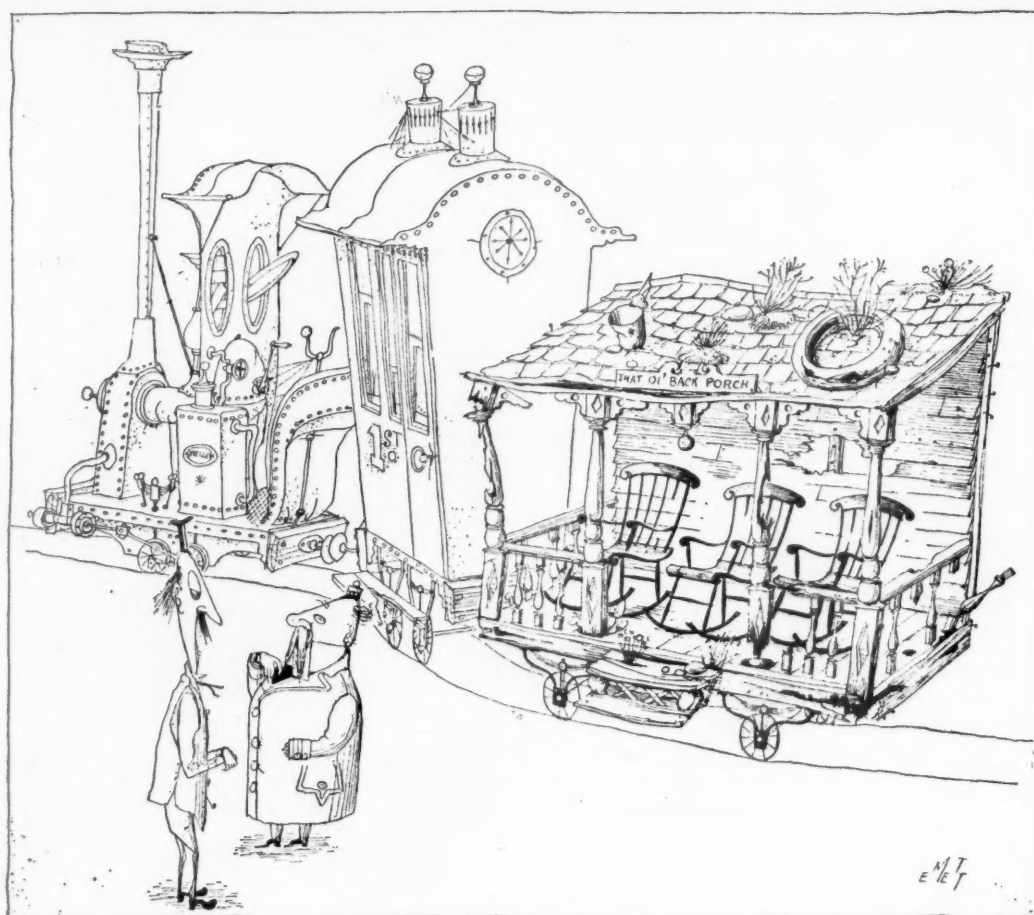
shall wax eloquent about them as I stand by the bar at my club, and I shall draw diagrams with the steward's pencil showing the size and shape of the meat, kidneys, bacon, etc.

Actually the meals at the Lion and Unicorn in Wurminster are very ordinary, as I know from long experience, but I have not lately been to America, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia, or even Scotland, and nearly all my friends seem to visit these places with almost monotonous regularity. On what spurious excuses they get their foreign currency I do not know and do not care, but their main object in going away seems to be to come back and tell me what enormous meals they have consumed. For the last six months hardly a day has passed without some greasy-looking member buttonholing me at the club and describing his gluttonous exercises with goggle-eyed complacency. For the next three months I shall take my revenge. The menus outlined above are of course a mere rough and amateurish beginning. I have noticed that the meals eaten by people abroad tend to become more and more sumptuous as they recede farther and farther into the past, and patriotism demands that the same should happen to the meals *not* eaten by me at the Lion and Unicorn Hotel, Wurminster.

D. H. B.



IN THE COILS



"Yes, we're making a SPECIAL bid for the American tourist business this summer."

Caricatures in Cork Street

OSBERT LANCASTER'S witty gallery of People and Places disappears at the end of this week, so you should lose no time in journeying to the Redfern at 20 Cork Street. Since Max's retirement a younger caricaturist has been knocking at the door; and now "there steps sprightly in the incomparable"—Osbert. Are we reminded of the older master? Is there more than a hint of Max in such legends as "Mr. Alan Moorehead searching for the unhackneyed phrase for Field-Marshal Montgomery" or "Miss Freya Stark explaining to a relatively unsophisticated audience the genius of Mr. Norman Hartnell"? Indeed, there is; but then, so far from disguising his allegiance, Mr. Lancaster gracefully acknowledges it in his lovely vision of "Sir Max Beerbohm," framed by a window—"fenestrating."

His style, however, is quite individual, and his irony has not the subtle flavour of Max's. His little pictures, painted with thin washes of gouache (sometimes used with water-colour) are more accomplished, more "finished" works of art, and for that reason less suggestive than Max's adumbrations drawn with deliberately tentative strokes. More-

over, whereas Max revelled in pricking balloons, his successor is never inclined to deflate his victims very much, and an apoplectic crimson lake serves his purpose equally for the countenance of "His Grace of York" and the quizzical features of Max. But that is by no means to disparage them; and indeed, such inspired visions as that of "Mr. Kingsley Martin," posed against a hoarding plastered with advertisements of propaganda and protest meetings, "looking on the bright side"—such visions take their place in the long succession of caricatures which have said as much on six square inches as a biographical chapter. Elsewhere in the room, students of Mr. Lancaster's published Classical Landscapes will find the original leaves from his sketch-book, painted with underlying irony in colours of remarkable purity and brilliance.

Mr. Kenneth Wood's collection of water-colours next door, which include some of his more recent impressions of Paris and Baghdad, did not, I confess, detain me very long; but then it isn't always easy to share the vision of the "inward eye" of the subjective painter. Anyhow, there he is, should you weary of the Lancastrian roses. N. A. D. W.

On the Art of Sitting

WHILE the last of the snow slips with a muffled wump from the tiles and an icy draught roars contemptuously through the newspaper stuffed under the door it is pleasant to sit by the fire and ruminate on the utter futility of the modern arm-chair.

The arms of this chair are three feet long and ten inches wide. Like an earlier writer, I measured it from side to side and would have put the result into a couplet if I had had Wordsworth's luck with the measurements. The seat is two and a half feet, all but, from front to rear, with a drop of nine inches from front edge to floor. The chair will accommodate seven, and in happier days not infrequently did so; for three persons of moderate build would perch with cocktails along each arm, while one, more nobly planned, sipped sherry in the middle. The whole "three-piece" of which this chair forms a part is built on similar lines so that it was possible (allowing ten for the sofa) to invite up to twenty-four guests without the necessity of bringing in the wickerwork chair from the kitchen. This was a convenience, and we were not ungrateful for it.

But I am not much comforted, as I sit here with my coat-collar turned up, by reflections such as these. The business of a chair is to make its owner comfortable, not to be a pantechnicon *iam rude donatum*. It should enfold the sitter, it should wrap a man round, as Sancho Panza said in another connection, like a cloak. This chair does neither. I have been in station waiting-rooms that wrapped me round more closely. The top of my head, when I sit back, projects some three inches above the rear wall of the chair, and though my elbows rest comfortably enough on the enormous arms my feet remain unsupported in the air. If my thighs were twice as long I dare say I could flex my knees over the front edge of the seat and so bring my extremities to rest; but in that case I should either be an anatomical absurdity or, if I were made to scale, some fifteen inches of my upper works, instead of three, would be exposed to the biting air. I am constrained to move further forward until my knees are free to bend, and I find that this has the added advantage of bringing the top of my head below the snow-line. Given a cushion to support the small of my back I might achieve a momentary contentment. But, cushion or no cushion, there is no finality here. Cold air, as you may read in any book on mountaineering, when checked by some natural feature hurls itself round the edges of the *massif* and sweeps with numbing ferocity down the gorges. The instinct to seek protection for the sides of my head drives me lower and lower into the chair, until by almost insensible gradations the whole head has sunk below the level of the arms of the chair. When I add that at no point do these rise to an elevation greater than nine inches above the broad level plain in which my trunk is resting, it will be realized that the upper part of the body must be practically horizontal before full protection is secured. At some stage in this settling process the elbows, finding themselves so awkwardly angled as to impose an unwarrantable strain on the shoulders, slip off the chair-arms, so that I am now at full stretch, with the weight supported on the heels and the shoulder-blades and my centre of gravity (for want of a less misleading term) hanging unconventionally in mid-air. One of two possibilities precipitates the final catastrophe. Either the occupant of the chair on the further (and draught-free) side of the fireplace lodges a protest against the encroachment of my feet on her living-space, or my back muscles give way. The result is the same in either

case; the whole structure sags grunting to the floor. The feet are now drawn up, to avoid provocation, and the back rests easily against the front of the chair. It is a position of reasonable warmth, coupled with a fleeting sense of security. The knowledge that it is scarcely possible to sink any lower carries with it, in the physical, no less than the moral sphere, a feeling of release from travail. It is journey's end. The floor may be hard, the head, undeniably, is unsupported; but at least the weight is distributed in accordance with the laws of dynamics, equilibrium has been attained, and the mind is rid at last of the nagging hope that somehow, by some lucky shift of hip or arm, complete tranquillity can be achieved.

I give myself ten minutes at the outside in this second-rate and utterly illusory Elysium. At the end of that time, and often much sooner, there is no longer room for doubt that the chair has all the time been receding with infinite stealth behind my back. This same chair, when required to move of a morning to give passage to vacuum cleaner or model railway, clings to its moorings with astonishing tenacity and can scarcely be shifted by two strong men. But in the evening the impact of a human back, poised as delicately as a butterfly against its forward edge, seems to be more than it can conscientiously bear. First the small of my back, then my shoulder-blades, then my neck, and finally the strongly defined bump where my intellect resides are called upon to take the strain. As a rule, when only the lingering friction between the top of my head and the upholstery stands between me and complete collapse, I give up and, rising to my feet, attempt to push the chair back towards the fire. It will not budge.

A weaker man might go to bed. But I am not so easily defeated. I simply sit down on the chair again, well back, with my elbows resting on the arms and the top of my head projecting some three inches above the rear wall. My feet are in mid-air. In fact, but for the circumstance that I am now perhaps eight inches further from the fire, I am no worse off than I was to start with. It is at this stage that I like to ruminate on the utter futility of the modern arm-chair.

H. F. E.

Night and Day

(Words and Music by Cold Worter.)

LIKE the drip, drip, drip in the slop-pails
That stand on all the chairs,
Like the splosh, splosh, splosh of the dirty wash
That trickles down the stairs,
Like the plop, plop, plop of the puddle
That lies on every floor,
My heart is beating, keeps repeating
Thaw, thaw, thaw!

Night and day, everything thaws,
Water flows beneath the beds and under the doors,
From the attic to the hall,
Down my lonely little bathroom wall
It dribbles on, night and day.
Night and day, if you came to my house
You would see an extensive river quivering through
my house,
And the torrent won't be through
Till the plumber comes to do what he has to do
Day and night, night and day.

V. G.

At the Pictures

My Brother Jonathan—*Blanche Fury*—*Against the Wind*—*The World is Rich*.

ALMOST every scene in *My Brother Jonathan* (Director: HAROLD FRENCH), as well as the general feeling and most of the actual outlines of the story, could be faithfully matched from

shouldn't object to a film's being full of clichés, for the ordinary public doesn't see enough films to have got tired of the clichés yet.)

Blanche Fury (Director: MARC ALLEGRET) is a big, handsome Technicolor version of another novel; whatever else may be wrong with it, a great deal of it is a pleasure to look at, and if you are at all sensitive to visual charm that makes up for a lot. Like *My Brother Jonathan*, it begins as it were at the end and is told in one long flashback—which I take to be a device for giving a long sprawling story some semblance of unity. *Blanche Fury* includes a number of the

has been more effectively (because authentically) treated before, and it comes two or three years too late to be helped by everyday and familiar feelings of partisanship. In essentials it is the story that impressed us in *School for Danger*, the story of the preliminary training, and the nerve-racking job, of the saboteurs from this country who were parachuted into German-occupied territory during the war; by comparison it loses much in not presenting (as that did) the real people, really re-enacting what they had really done, but the situations and pursuits are full enough of tension in themselves to be remarkably exciting even though the characters are a bit shadowy.

A final word in recommendation of PAUL ROTH's documentary about the food situation, *The World is Rich*. Its immediate impact is greater, I think, than that of *World of Plenty*; and the reason is probably the greater proportion of photographs (ravaged farms, European relief scenes, emaciated bodies—and mouths, mouths, mouths) to isotypes and diagrams, as well as what seemed to me to be a greater variety of explanatory voices and less indulgence in rhetorical pleading as distinct from straight description. One little shot that sticks in the mind: the starved boys, scrabbling among spilled currency notes for something to eat. R. M.



(*My Brother Jonathan*)

ARRIVAL OF NEW PARTNER

Dr. Hammond	FINLAY CURRIE
Rachel Hammond	DULCIE GRAY
Jonathan Dakers	MICHAEL DENISON

earlier British films of the same kind. I can't be bothered to remember all the titles, but without any brain-cudgelling whatever I think of *The Citadel* and *So Well Remembered* and *Fame is the Spur* and *Master of Bankdam*; even those four alone would cover the ground pretty thoroughly. There's a limit to the interest one can take in very well-trodden ground, and I have to say that *My Brother Jonathan* seems to go over it all again in a worthy but pedestrian manner. There is one new face: MICHAEL DENISON makes a pleasant first appearance as the self-sacrificing hero who becomes one of those burningly sincere young doctors in a Midlands industrial town. But he isn't memorable, because he is given nothing much memorable to do or say. There is the usual emergency operation scene; the suspense of that old standby never fails to get across, and the film livens up for a few minutes as if it had been given an injection. Otherwise I found it dishearteningly dull. I'd seen it all before—and what's more, any average once-a-week filmgoer is likely to have seen it all before. (I add this because I keep coming up against the argument that a critic

people and circumstances favoured by what may be called the Jane Eyre category of best-sellers: the noble (Staffordshire) country house, the spirited beautiful girl who comes as governess, the spectacular fire, the gipsies . . . What it unluckily fails to include is that other important ingredient of the best-seller, the quality that keeps its audience deeply interested in what is about to happen next. Only the simplest filmgoers, I think, the people who go for vicarious adventure and wish to "lose themselves" in a story, will be much moved by any of this, in spite of the passionate scenes between the ambitious girl (VALERIE HOBSON) and the embittered man (STEWART GRANGER); at the end he is hanged for murder and she dies in child-birth, but the affair somehow seems not particularly tragic. Yes, the pictures are often very attractive, but the story they tell has singularly little effect on the emotions.

The theme of *Against the Wind* (Director: CHARLES CRICHTON)

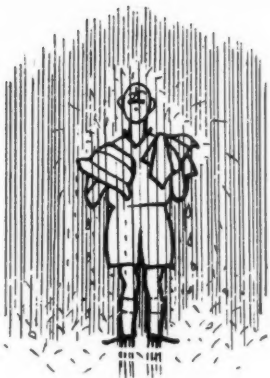


(*Blanche Fury*)

ARRIVAL OF NEW GOVERNESS

First—and Last—Impressions of Singapore

(From our Correspondent East of Suez.)



ON the map the Island of Singapore is almost exactly the same size as the Isle of Wight. Johore is roughly Southampton, the city of Singapore is approximately Ventnor. It must always have been a remarkable place—and to-day it is practically incredible.

It is only five days' travel from Norfolk, but it would be difficult to give one's breathing apparatus a more marked change of air. Coming down from 10,000 feet you get the impression that you have landed in an exceptionally large green laundry—never much warmer than 90 degrees and rarely cooler than 70 degrees. The rich green grass seems absurd. One-handed golfers with sharp mashies cut it, using a continuous circular swing. There are palm trees on the coast that might be on Hawaii, and all the flowers look like orchids and have lovely names like Temple Flowers and Flames of the Forest. But it rains, with all the ferocity of Hollywood rain, one day in three; and several wars are going on in the district.

Nevertheless, Singapore is under the British flag and is still orderly and prosperous. But it is by no means dull. During the week I was there a large ocean liner was held up at sea by pirates and the passengers were relieved of \$1,000,000 worth of currency and valuables. A few days later an air-liner arrived from Indonesia with only one passenger. He had no passport and turned out to be dead, so the

machine flew away again next day without explanation. A man I met at lunch went home to find his house burgled by masked bandits. They took his wife's jewellery and all his handkerchiefs.

Most of the European residents were imprisoned during the war. (Radio Malaya ran a Brains Trust not so long ago, and three of the four men taking part had been in Changi gaol together.) Many are still suffering from the effects, but a surprising number look back on the experience quite cheerfully and there is already talk of setting up an Old Changi Club, complete with tie. One business man, who was having a difficult time as a result of the Japanese occupation, said he sometimes almost wished he was back. "When I was a prisoner of war," he said, "I had nothing to worry about except the next meal. Now I seem to have to worry about everything except that."

Another big business man had achieved an astounding reputation for initiative. In his camp the Japs used



depreciation and interest on capital. But in practice the demand was so great that in a short time it was possible to reduce prices by nearly fifty per cent.

Domestic life has its own excitements—and compensations. Laundry service is virtually instantaneous. Servants are, as befits the Orient, silent and inscrutable. My own valet was an elderly lady with a long pigtail. She wore little clogs which she took off outside my room. I could hear her coming from far away down the stone passage—*plink-plonk, plink-plonk*—the clogs sounding two quite distinct musical notes.

Breakfast in the Senior Mess was swift, silent and satisfying. Porridge and eggs-and-bacon appeared like magic. There were no greetings. I nearly uttered an incautious word the first morning, but a horrified boy ran up with a morning newspaper and a catastrophe was avoided.

Shops are stocked with new cars, both British and American. The tax on petrol has just been increased by 1s. 2d. per gallon. Income tax will be extracted this year for the first time in history. Sucking pigs have just been decontrolled, with the result that there has been a marked fall in prices and an increase in supply. In spite of that the cost of living is shockingly high. This is said to be due to the price of rice plus inflation. The currency situation is a madhouse. Financially nothing seems to mean anything. But to those who recall the fact that Singapore was mostly swamp a hundred years ago and has just emerged from occupation by the Japanese, its rate of recovery is quite sensational.



to make prisoners catch flies as a punishment. A man might be ordered to catch a hundred flies and produce the bodies as evidence. Blue-bottles didn't count. It was a deadly serious business. The flies were counted and checked with meticulous care. So this prisoner invented a fly-catching machine which enabled him to keep the camp supplied. His fly service was deeply appreciated by those of his colleagues who were not built on fly-catching lines. It was organized on a strict commercial basis. Capital was raised and the charges for flies were fixed to cover overhead charges,



Mr. Punch at MacMurren

I

HERE we are in the rude or upper portion of our island, to observe the phenomenon of ski-ing over grouse moors and to go back to school again at a kind of co-educational commando unit run on the most humane lines from a comfortable hotel in the valley of the Spey. With a catch in its voice the Treasury said we couldn't go to Switzerland. It seems there is no need to go to Switzerland, either for snow or expert instruction in the craft of mocking it on planks. Our aim is to check up on this admirably British curiosity. Nothing short of national bankruptcy could ever have made us realize what is in the cupboard at home.

Let it be clearly understood, before we take to the peaks, that Mr. P.'s A. (A standing for Artist as well as Arcticologist) and myself are home-loving men from whom the ambition to hurtle madly through Nature's major refrigerators ebbed decisively a great many years ago, if indeed it was ever discernible in us at all. As founder-members of the Uphill-Lonely and Fartoofer Clubs, both of them progressive movements designed to give ski-ing a recognizable rhythm, we have a position to keep up. At the same time we shall be prepared to risk tibia and fibula, heavily insured, to a certain strictly limited extent.

How Swiss are the Highlands? This will no doubt be the first question asked by the intelligent reader. It is not an easy one to answer. The differences between these sturdy territories are obvious, yet they have much in common besides mountains. In both of them the splendid pantomime of national fancy-dress has produced

some of its most memorable fruits, and in both, as we discovered the moment we became entangled in a village dance, the gearing of the voice to special hall-marked regional noises indicative of ecstasy and defiance is freely cultivated. Already we have had the pleasure of brushing skirts with a kilted skier, and we have also come on a thriving legend of a lone piper who stem-christies through the dusk, making the crags steam with the frenzy of his lament. The sun is shyer here than in Switzerland, and you may have to walk a little farther to reach the snow. But the main difference is probably psychological. The Swiss

carried us out into the street. In similar circumstances any well-brought-up Swiss girl would have promised us at least another three feet by morning.

The life of our hotel is very much what it would be in Switzerland; that is to say, it gives the impression of having been shaped by a Dr. Arnold gone hilariously Montessori. On the one hand there is a decent awe for prefects whose torsos are studded as dramatically with the badges of famous ski-clubs as a well-travelled suit-case with views of Rome and Honolulu. On the other everybody is delightfully friendly and the bar is merely a projection of the nursery



have had half a century to recover from the joke of ski-ing, while to the Scots it is fairly new. The point was forcibly illustrated when we dropped off at the village shop on our way from the station to buy a photogravure of the distillery, and asked the girl if more snow could be expected. The honest warmth of her "Ah hope not!"

slopes. Gluevin, you may be sad to hear, does not figure on its counter, but in addition to liquid reserves of the native firewater rare in these spiritless days there is a magic fount of draught stout, apparently Pluto-borne across the Irish Sea.

Wherever we go in the hotel we trip first over a lurking rucsaic and then over a conversation roughly of the following texture:

"The silly clot went for a burton in the gulley."

"He's as much notion of keeping his weight forward as my Aunt Annie."

"I tell you *slalom* means golf-course in Norwegian."

"Personally I always found the Parsenn a sheer piece of *apfelstrudel*."

"Poor girl, she sank without a trace."

"If it wasn't for all this snow I honestly believe I could ski perfectly."

"Dear old boy. He christies like a runaway hansom."

"I remember when I was at Pontresina in 'twenty-eight there was a feller used to *luge* downstairs to dinner—"

Most of those exchanges end with



Invasion



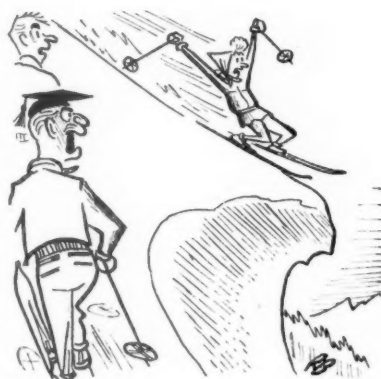
the dispatch of a fresh expedition to make sure the stout is still flowing in reliably. Mr. Bevan has not been mentioned at all since we arrived, Mr. Molotov but once, and then only in reference to an ingenious twist on thin ice which the Headmaster was demonstrating. The air in these parts is far too pure for politics.

We mountaineers have always been mighty breakfasters. Here at Mac-Murren no sooner is the last bap engulfed than there begins the morning ritual of the waxing of the skis. This, however, only makes them go faster, so while our co-pupils are thus ludicrously employed Mr. P.'s A. and I take our woodwork round the corner and scar its surfaces savagely with our nail-files—a trick divulged to me long ago by a dying Eskimo to whom I had done some trifling kindness. It is often nice to have an extra second to decide out of which river-bottom you would rather be picked.

At an hour mercifully later than those intolerably early starts I connect with Switzerland we mount a vintage

bus from which the acetylene headlights had already rusted while Hitler was still a little lad. Mr. P.'s A. is showing it to you on the homeward run, when for density and bouquet its atmosphere rivals the costliest steam-rooms in Jermyn Street. In it we travel some miles up the valley, to be decanted at a shooting-lodge set snugly among pines. Here, reluctantly shouldering the cumbrous furniture of our sport, we begin to mount into the heart of the Grampian *massif* a wee purrrling burrrn gurruling prettily beside us.

Soon we reach the snow-line, and almost directly it becomes necessary to cross in single file a long narrow ledge which Mr. P.'s A. is also bringing to your attention. Each time I face it I am reminded of a picture in a book from which I once tried to learn English history. This showed the King of Balance, Blondin, offering to take the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, over Niagara in a wheelbarrow. It had the unforgettable caption, "The young Prince laughingly declined." Well, any healthy impulse to laughingly decline fades quickly under the eagle eye of our Headmaster, and so with our hearts bumping in our



"Lean FORWARDS!"

slithering boots we somehow reach the other side with a little sal volatile left over.

I've delayed too long introducing you to two very noteworthy dogs who are our shadows on the snows. Trickle is the most engaging sheep-dog who

never said no to mutton. Her affection would melt the Monte Rosa. While Clarence is a mainly cylindrical terrier whose bottomless guile and anaesthetic innocence would surely have taken him, with slightly different physical equipment, to the top of any of the learned professions. I make it my business to arrive at the luncheon rendezvous ten minutes ahead of schedule almost entirely for the pleasure of watching Clarence rifling the rucksacs in the disinterested manner of a bishop at a wedding buffet.

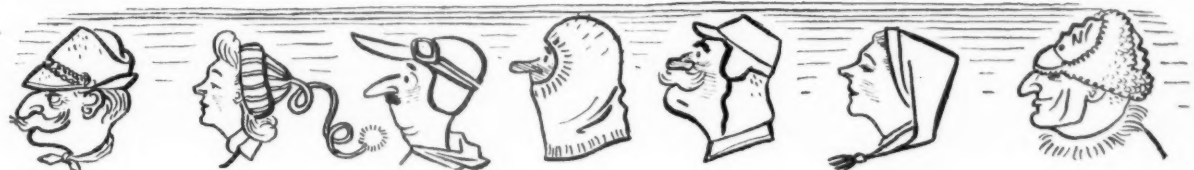
Some of the class put on their skis sooner than others, to frolic by the wayside, and it is not long before the stentorian voice of the Headmaster is raised in academic exhortation. Once clear of the valley we suffer the first impact of a wind expressly delivered from the pleasure-resorts beyond the



Clarence takes the biscuit.

Urals, the North Sea doing nothing to effeminate it on the way. The frailer mind leaps forward to the golden moment when the bus will pause on its homeward glissade at a certain village local, the public bar of which we shall transform for a restorative quarter of an hour into an authentic corner of the Engadine. But tempering our kumberbunds to the blast we stouter souls set about our pleasures like men.

In our next chilling instalment we intend to clamp on the hickories and actually take you to the witch-bound summits of the Caledonian Uplands—whose motto has till now been "Deer At Any Price." ERIC.





"Isn't it wonderful, darling? So far not a single toast-rack or cruet."

Copy Cat

BATS in the belfry—
one, two, three—
very seldom
worry me.

What drives me nuts
is the velvet-soft
copy cat
in the apple loft.

Her
fur
which crackles
has been rolled
in tar and cinnamon,
and gin and gold:
her eyes are agate,
her paws are pink,
and she's blissfully happy
with ink to drink.

Her spectacles are
of tortoiseshell:
she reads Nat Gould,
and E. M. Dell,

Kit Marlowe,
Alpha of the Plough,
Gone with the Wind,
and The Golden Bough.

She purrs on the Abyss's
daisied brink
and copies whatever I chance to
think.

I wake,
get up,
shave, dress,
and face
the morning porridge's
commonplace,
milked, sugared, and kindly
countenance:
I think of Russia,
I think of France:

And dreamily doing
precisely that
but the other way round
is the copy cat.

She haunts my days,
she haunts my nights;
she likes cods' roe,
but she won't touch lights.

What does she copy?
The things I think.
She stares at them
with a baleful blink,
pats them,
and pounces,
shuts her eyes,
pins their tails
with a bland surprise—
reads a chapter
of William James,
giggles,
and winks at the coal-fire's
flames,
and goes to sleep
with a Cheshire grin.

She's perfectly happy—
she's in the bin. R. C. S.



THE IRON DOOR

MONDAY, February 23rd.

—Even the severest critic of the present-day British diet must have been a trifle startled to hear in the House of Commons to-day that we are "eating the Argentine railways and tramways." But Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS (who is never surprised by anything) took even this allegation quietly—and admitted it. Then it turned out that the charge was a figure of speech, meaning that the Government had disposed of the British-owned railways and tramways in the Argentine in return for food supplies.

Anything wrong with that? demanded Mr. STRACHEY, the Food Minister. Plenty, replied the critics—the fact that we've got to live in the future, for instance, and the fact that man cannot live by Argentine beef alone.

But after a good deal of argument on that line it was decided that the bargain made with the South American republic was probably the best that could be got in the circumstances. There was a certain logic in the Government contention, which was (roughly) that there was not much point in living in the future if one died of hunger in the meantime.

The Argentine, in company with Chile, figured in another little discussion. Mr. EDEN asked the Prime Minister for an assurance (which he readily gave) that Britain would not allow herself to be "cheeked and chivvied" out of her possessions in any part of the world. This had particular reference to the claims of the two other governments to Deception Island and other dependencies of ours in those parts.

Mr. EDEN gained another ringing cheer when he emphatically refused (in default of convincing proof to the contrary) to believe that British forces had had anything to do with the blowing up of Jewish shops and hotels in Jerusalem, which crime had led to the murder of a number of British soldiers by Jews. The Jewish charge that the British had been responsible for the outrage was plainly resented by all parts of the House, and the Government spokesman demanded some proof in support of the allegation. Unless and until this was forthcoming, said Mr. EDEN stoutly, the House believed their people innocent. The crash of cheers confirmed his view.

Then the House exercised its traditional function of hanging on tightly to the strings of the public purse, and argued for hours about supplementary

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Monday, February 23rd.—House of Commons: Talk of Cash.

Tuesday, February 24th.—House of Lords: Economics. House of Commons: A Charge Denied.

Wednesday, February 25th.—House of Commons: British Islands—and Rivers.

Thursday, February 26th.—House of Commons: More Fun Next Week.

estimates put forward by various Departments. Minister after Minister had to go into the witness-box and defend his claims to cash, never an easy task. In the end, however, all were acquitted with relatively little stain on their characters, and they left the court with relief written all over their faces. For there is no half-measure about the way in which the Commons grip the purse-strings.

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON announced the setting up of a committee—under Lord UTHWATT—to consider the law of leasehold.



Impressions of Parliamentarians

36. Mr. Creech Jones
Secretary of State for the Colonies

TUESDAY, February 24th.—Lord SAMUEL has a dry humour which occasionally leads him to poke gentle fun at the "experts." To-day, opening a debate on the economic situation (which does not, by and large, suggest jokes), he coined the delightful word "de-mopping" as applying to savings that were withdrawn to pay for necessities or luxuries. It is the opposite of "mopping up" which, as every student of economists' jargon knows, means the acquisition by the Government of all one's spare (and other) cash.

Lord SAMUEL had a solution of his own for the present economic difficulties. He suggested taxation cuts—

instead of the new imposts most consider the best means of warding off inflation—and the production and sale of more goods, in place of the austerity piled on austerity others advocate. Their Lordships looked on in mild surprise as these heretical views were expounded, but they listened with respectful attention all the same to a

closely-reasoned and cogent argument. Lord SAMUEL wound up with a warning that we could not just let things drift, and that the situation that was "just round the corner" was not peace and prosperity but something very different: "The Battle of the Prices."

Lord SIMON announced that the country was heading for the rapids and that it was a fallacy to think that there was some great golden barrier hidden away somewhere which would miraculously prevent our going over the edge. Steady steering and hard and united pulling were the only things to save us.

Lord PAKENHAM, who is by way of being the Government's "Utility Minister," so versatile is he, paid tribute to the British people for the way in which they are fighting to restore their own economic position, but agreed that the country (like many another) was in a "pretty tight spot." However, such a situation lacked novelty in our eventful history, and he made it plain that he doubted not that the story would have a happy—if possibly delayed—ending.

The Archbishop of YORK's view was that there should be "something like a Council of State" to handle the nation's crisis—a suggestion that was received with notable fridity by the Party leaders present. Lord ADDISON, leading the House, promised that the Government would not go off the Frankness Standard when framing their coming White Paper on the economic situation. He implied that that fact would be self-evident in the document, and their Lordships, tut-tutting resignedly, let the matter drop—for the present.

The Commons were given a further account of events in Palestine. Mr. REES-WILLIAMS, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, announced (amid cheers) that inquiries had clearly demonstrated that British forces were in no way responsible for the outrage which had led to "reprisals" on British troops, police and civilians. The Arab guerrillas had, in fact, claimed it as their work, and the Jewish leaders had not responded to the British Government's demand for information implicating the British.



"Now don't do anything reckless, dear—just mow down a few Romans and get home safe and sound."

Lord WINTERTON, with some heat, asked that a prosecution for seditious libel be instituted against people in Britain ("And in this House!" shouted Members angrily) who had blamed the British forces for the explosion. The Minister promised to look into the matter. And then Mr. LIPSON, one of the Jewish Members, asked—"now that this foul calumny had been disposed of"—that the Minister should convey to the British forces in Palestine the admiration of the House for the way in which the grim and perilous situation had been handled.

Mr. EDEN snapped in an inquiry about the practical steps being taken to protect the lives of the men to whom admiration is to be expressed, and Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, the Minister of Defence, said this was a matter for the local commanders, but that they would have the fullest support of the Government for anything they thought it necessary to do.

WEDNESDAY, February 25th.—A third chapter was added to the unhappy Palestine Story, when Mr. SIDNEY SILVERMAN asked for a further statement from the Government in view of the fact that the Arab Higher Committee had repudiated as false the

reported Arab claim to have carried out the explosion outrage. The Government spokesman replied that he had seen the denial, but that his statement yesterday—that the Arabs had claimed the "credit"—was true. He stood by his belief that, whoever was responsible, the British forces in Palestine were not.

Mr. ERNEST BEVIN was asked about the Argentinian and Chilean claim to British possessions in the Falkland Islands, and replied that he wanted the case to go to the International Court of Justice, but apparently the claimants did not. He added, in his best style, that "people could not go on interfering with British territories and then, as a result of kicking up a row, expect us to go to the Security Council with the case."

This gained a round of cheers, and Mr. BEVIN added that "it was no use talking about the United Nations unless people were prepared to accept the International Court which was part of it." Which got another round of cheers—or perhaps half-round would be a better description, since few came from Mr. B.'s own side.

Then there was a learned and technical discussion on rivers, their pollution and preservation. The

Government desires to set up twenty-nine River Boards to co-ordinate the rivers of England and Wales, and Sir THOMAS DUGDALE, from the Opposition front bench, accepted this proposal as "a useful preliminary, and nothing else, to real reforms." Mr. G. A. BROWN, for the Ministry of Agriculture, retorted by blaming the Conservatives for river pollution—but the Bill was allowed to pass without a division, all the same. The "Whodunit—youdunit" style of argument is now common form, and serves on almost all occasions, appropriate and otherwise.

THURSDAY, February 26th.—There was rejoicing among the Conservatives when Mr. MORRISON announced that, next week, a discussion is to take place on the nationalized industries and the right of Members to ask questions about them.

For a long time Members on both sides of the House have complained that no questions are allowed, because no Minister is responsible for the industries, except in a general and un-detailed way. It is said that Mr. CHURCHILL will himself go into the fray on this thorny topic. Which should mean that the fur will fly.



"I say—could we be of mutual assistance?"

The Cosmic Mess

THIS column is, of course, officially on strike till the University Members (Abolition) Affair is settled. But it is still carrying on, unofficially, with some of the very miscellaneous jobs an ungrateful State has thrust upon it. Every morning, when it opens its fresh and sparkling little eyes, a cloud passes over the coming day: for it remembers that it is (it cannot discover why) Chairman of the Literary Sub-Committee of the Olympic Games, 1948, no less. Uncountable readers, you probably do not know that, though perhaps you cannot throw a javelin or run very fast for 1,500 metres to your country's glory, you can at least paint a picture, design a building, compose a symphony, or write a saga which will win Olympian honours and put the foreigner in his place. The fact that you are not aware of this (although, they say, it has been published in the papers) is one of this column's early-morning worries: for time is galloping past, and the foreign bards, they say, are as busy as bees. Indeed, if this column had known about all this before, it might have popped in a saga or two of its own. That, it supposes,

would be cheating now: but you, uncountable readers, can still write for your country, and you have till March 27th. So listen carefully to the rules:

"The following works will be eligible:

(a) Lyrics (e.g., songs, odes, hymns, cantatas, ballads, lyric prose, essays).

(b) Dramatic Works (e.g., tragedies, dramas, comedies, farces, librettos, open-air plays, radio-plays, dialogues, scenarios).

(c) Epic Works (e.g., short stories, novels, epic poems, narrative poems).

Only works—or parts of a work—which do not comprise more than twenty thousand words, and the contents of which *relate to sport*, will be admitted.

All subjects relating to sport may be mentioned, e.g., literary works dealing with the entire domain of sport, a branch of sport, a sporting event or idea, the Olympic idea, the sporting character of a person or the fate of a human being influenced by sport, even though these relations to sport are not the main subject of the work."

You have, remember, till March 27th (the Arts and Music have longer). But you are not bound to dash off a new ode, cantata or novel. An old work

will do, provided it "has been executed during the course of the XIII Olympiad, that is, after the 1st January, 1944, and has not been entered for the Art Competition of any previous Olympiads".

It is no good, therefore, bunging in a few hundred lines of Pindar or the Æneid. They have had their chance.

Three British works will be selected in each of the sections (a), (b) and (c); and these will be sent up to the main arena, there to battle with the foreign compositions. There, it may be, they will meet three entries (in each section) from any or all of forty-seven countries. It is not expected, they say, that the entries will be quite so numerous as that. But there it is—in theory, they may be; and that is why this column has practically ceased to sleep. The judgment in this tremendous literary tourney will be delivered by a committee consisting of this column (if it has not emigrated by then), two British "experts", and two gentlemen from the International Jury—a Swiss and a Dane. This column hopes that those gentlemen are better acquainted with the language of Finland, Yugoslavia, China, Egypt and Germany

(to name only a few) than this column is.

Two more little details. You should send your work, or works, uncountable readers (by March 27th), to:

The Arts Committee of the Organizing Committee for the XIV Olympiad,
c/o The Royal Academy of Music,
Marylebone Road,
London, N.W.1.

"Contributions by editors or commercial undertakings will not be admitted."

And one or two uncountable readers perhaps are already muttering "What about prizes?" You must put out of your head, by the way, the notion that, at the last moment, you may win the Games for Britain with a sonnet, a sonata, or a design for a stadium. For no nation "wins the Games": only individuals can win the prizes. You may win in either of the three categories (a), (b) and (c) (if the International Jury thinks you are good enough), the

First Prize: Olympic silver-gilt medal with diploma;

Second Prize: Olympic silver medal with diploma; or the

Third Prize: Olympic bronze medal with diploma.

Or you may get an "Honourable Mention" with diploma for a contribution of merit.

"The Jury will make the awards at the opening of the Olympic Games... and the names of the prizewinners will be made public during the Olympic Victory Ceremony in the Stadium."

Any questions? No, surely not. If there are any, they must not be addressed to this column. It is quite unable to tell you what is meant by "a sporting idea": or whether under "the fate of a human being influenced by sport" the story of a man who gave all his life to football pools or greyhound-racing could qualify. To deal with such conundrums this column has appointed a Public Relations Officer, who will be found, it hopes, from time to time at the address of the Arts Committee (tastefully printed above).

The Musical, Art, Architecture and Sculpture Sub-Committees, this column thinks, have a comparatively simple task: for it must be much easier to understand and judge a piece of Chinese music or an Abyssinian bust than a Czechoslovakian cantata or a Swiss novel about skating. But even they will have their problems. Under "Music", for example, the rules say severely:

"All works submitted must be based on the ideals of the Olympic Games..."

And how they are to say whether a violin concerto is strictly Olympic in tone and feeling this column, at least, would hate to make a guess.

Every artist is entitled to his own mannerisms: and this column much admires, as we all do, the skill of the B.B.C. "commentators" on sporting events. A difficult job, very well done. But must there be so much of "that" and "there"? At this moment this column is listening to an excited (and exciting) eye-witness account of a football-match. We never hear about the ball. It is always "that" ball. Jones is putting "that" ball into "that" scrum. Smith has fallen on "that ball there". Last night this column listened to a Big Fight, and the lively describer had just the same technique. "Jones shoots out that left"—"There they are in that clinch there"—"Smith is against those ropes and Jones is using that right to the body." And finally there was "Smith dancing on those toes of his". A small point, perhaps, but there is that point this column would make here.

One or two uncountable readers may recall some sceptical chat a week or two ago concerning the Treasury assertion that "in the first nine months of 1947 horse-breeding assisted the export trade to the tune of £3 m. in dollars". Since then the man Haddock has put a question to the



"... and my next impression is of that inimitable star..."

President of the Board of Trade: "How many thoroughbred horses were exported to hard-currency countries in 1947, and what was the total yield?" The Board of Trade's answer was: "Exports of thoroughbred horses are not recorded separately".

So the mystery thickens.

It is quite untrue that a University Member, meeting Mr. Herbert Morrison in a corridor, said to him, in bad but intelligible Latin, "*Moriturus te sputo*". A. P. H.

Particulars

WHILE I remember it—did you see what they are going to do about that place, in the north I think it is, unless it is where Eva stayed that time when they thought of growing tomatoes, so it may be Cornwall, only that's not near Carlisle, is it, and I seem to remember that being mentioned; anyway it is somewhere if it isn't, because I saw a thing in the paper about it, and I wondered if you knew; such a lovely picture—historical, and it seems such a shame to have been all those years in the family, to part with it I mean, but I suppose it is the money, like everybody else with lovely homes and lovely things, though I don't think they are selling, they are just going away—taxation and servants probably—and want it looked after, so apparently it is being taken over for the nation, a great waste it seems to me—coals to Newcastle; more people will see it, of course, if they want to, but I don't think they bother much; crowds of people may not appreciate a lovely gallery. I don't mean pictures, I mean a minstrels' gallery—half of them have never heard of one—because this is not a picture, it is a house. It is not very big; I know because I saw it the other day in a newspaper with a pair of flannel trousers dating back to the time of Elizabeth—so quaint.

I could give you the name, because I read it; it begins with an F or a G—unless it is C—the name of the people, I mean, and I thought at the time that I had heard you speak of them, but I believe it had Court tacked on somewhere—unless I am mistaken and that was the name of the house; or was it Hall, and that was their name? Anyway, you will know; it was one or the other, for of course there was a name, and I felt sure if I just gave you the particulars you would recognize the people and everything.

MISS LENORE COFFEE and Miss W. JOYCE COWEN, the authors of *Family Portrait* at the Strand, make it clear on the programme that in showing Mary as the mother of other sons born after Christ they are only interpreting the Authorized Version literally and have no wish to offend those who take a different view of St. Mark's verse about "the brother of James and Joseph, and of Juda and Simon." Certainly this is a most reverent play, not straining at all to be theatrical. In giving us the reflection of Christ as seen in his Mother and her circle, honest peasants angry at the withdrawal of the best craftsman from the family team of carpenters and upset lest his revolutionary teaching endanger a good name, they clearly cannot touch on more than the least important aspects of the meaning of Christ; but this part of our picture of him is nevertheless important and to me it seems well worth giving. The surging domestic life of the Nazareth home has all the colour of one of Miss G. B. Stern's Jewish studies; at the tavern at Capernaum we get a vivid impression of the tremendous crowd excitement which Christ aroused; and in the fine scene when Mary, searching for him desperately, comes on Mary Magdalen in the empty room after the Last Supper, we come nearest in the latter's simple testimony to the divine reflection.

Mary is curiously unconscious of her Son's divinity, but she is the perfectly understanding mother; and this quality of infinite sympathy gives Miss FAY COMPTON one of the best parts she has ever had. She plays it magnificently, holding us spellbound by the beauty of her voice and yet never cramping the effects of the others. This is great acting, which should not be missed. Miss MARY HORN is very good as Mary Magdalen—the presence of two of whom in London must be a record unlikely to be equalled—Miss CLARE HARRIS as Mary Cleophas gives a shrewd portrait of a sharp but kindly aunt, and as the gossiping mistress of the tavern Miss ELLEN POLLOCK introduces a light

At the Play

Family Portrait (STRAND)—*Cockpit* (PLAYHOUSE)
Gathering Storm (ST. MARTIN'S)

note skilfully. Altogether a convincing production, by Miss CHLOE GIBSON.

Unless they are in the hands of the CRAZY GANG I am never completely happy about plays in which the cast keeps leaping in and out of the stalls, and in the case of Miss BRIDGET BOLAND's *Cockpit* at the Playhouse I had the uncomfortable suspicion, though unfounded as it turned out,



(*Gathering Storm*)

GRANDMOTHERS ARE SO OBSTINATE.

Mrs. Hardlestone MISS NANCY PRICE
Ned Hardlestone MR. EMRYS JONES

that the lady in the next seat was raising steam to declare herself an irredentist Bulgar; for the theme is a transit unit for displaced persons run by a British officer from the stage of a provincial theatre in Germany. On the whole, however, Miss BOLAND justifies her use of the all-in method, and Mr. MICHAEL MACOWAN's government of a difficult production is as resourceful as Mr. MICHAEL WARRE's ingenious décor. The author's depressing but unassailable point is that, as between peoples, fear and goodwill evaporate at pretty well the same spot; and she illustrates this with a nice public-school boy doing his best to

persuade the Chetniks and Partisans of each country to go home in peace, urging it on the grounds of sense.

As if that had anything to do with it. Only when a case of bubonic plague is suspected among the massed D.P.s in the locked theatre are politics forgotten and common causes discovered, and the instant the shadow lifts murder and bitterness break out afresh. There is some genuine tragedy in this play, and also arresting grimness, which is quite different. Both are relieved mainly by the sturdy humours of Yorkshire, emanating from a sergeant who is indomitably a man of the world. Mr. JOSEPH O'CONOR's *Captain* is handsomely true to type, Mr. ARTHUR HAMBLING is 'Uddersfield to a T, and Miss DIANA GRAVES and Mr. GEOFFREY DUNN are the pick of a very competent team. Perhaps the most affecting moment in the evening is that in which the crazed little tinker wheels his perambulator out into the new Europe.

The thing I like best about farmhouse drama is that the men never have any work to do. This is as it should be, but it makes the mud on their trousers an absorbing mystery. Impressive sound effects testify to a varied menagerie in the background of *Gathering Storm* at the St. Martin's, but I felt it must have been rapidly dying of neglect. The two *Hardlestone* boys have other fish to fry. The slightly loopy one is kept pretty busy stopping the dog from chewing voles, while the

elder, having picked up a gold-digger in the vicious milieu of a milk-bar, is occupied in murdering his martinet grandmother and planting the most implausible evidence on his brother. This play, which is by Messrs. GORDON GLENNON and REYNER BARTON, is a rather cumbrous job, and Mr. MILES MALLESON's production emphasizes its slowness. Miss NANCY PRICE plays the sentimental old tyrant with authority but not without infringing the Cold Comfort frontier, Mr. BRYAN FORBES is good as the gentle booby and Mr. EMRYS JONES succeeds in suggesting a very hard-pushed young man.

ERIC.

At the Opera

Tristan und Isolde (COVENT GARDEN)

Il Trovatore (SADLER'S WELLS)

Acis and Galatea (ROYAL ALBERT HALL)

THE Prelude is too slow and the strings sound gritty . . . How I wish that sailor would sing in tune about his Irish maid . . . Now *Isolde* summons her magical powers, invokes the tempest to sink the ship—what a voice this is of KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD! What power and sweep, what depth, what mastery and scorching relentless vengeance! An excellent *Kurwenal* too, just like a breath of fresh air, but is AUGUST SEIDER a *Tristan* to match this *Isolde*? Hardly. His voice is too cloudy to be heroic . . . Now they drink the Love Potion . . .

At this point I realize with a shock that I have listened to the whole of the first act in cold detachment. Will the magic of *Tristan* never steal over my senses again?

But the spell does still work, the more powerfully for being so long forgotten. The glare of the Day motif, the music of *Isolde's* impatience, her remembered ecstasy as she awaits Night that will bring Love caring not though it also bring Death—these make one hold one's breath; and by the time the curtain rises on Act II and *King Mark's* hunting-horns echo through the trees of the garden—by what magic does WAGNER convey that the echo of the distant horns is floating on the air of a balmy summer night?—the old spell is cast. One is no longer outside the drama, a mere spectator. One is dissolved in marvelous music and carried far away on the wings of a glorious voice. One almost shares *Isolde's* longing for the reign of eternal Night. Will the horns never fade away, the king never be gone? Must the warning torch, hated symbol of Day, still burn? Away with *Brangane* and her fears and warnings! What does she know of Love? Come Night, come Death!

So one is swept onward by the ecstasy of that meeting of *Tristan* and *Isolde* until *King Mark's* heart-broken and unbelieving "Mir dies? Dies, Tristan, mir?" which rears itself like a rock against which the stream of passion swirls, wild and turbulent. In thus giving space to *King Mark's* dignified reproaches to the friend who had betrayed him, WAGNER holds in suspense the force and passion of the drama to sublimate them instead of dissipating them in violence. Thus in the third act the Love Potion music is no longer a subtle, penetrating fire—

it has become dark and leaden. The melancholy of the shepherd's horn speaking of distance and separation, and the anguish of the wounded knight that makes him curse Love, cannot be assuaged in the light of the sun. *Isolde* at last reaches him and together they cross the threshold of eternal Night. The beauty of FLAGSTAD's singing of the "Liebestod" is indescribable. The music is a sea of funereal purple over which floats this glorious voice. The doom is accomplished, it dissipates itself to the winds of heaven.

Tristan und Isolde is the peak of achievement of the Covent Garden Opera Trust so far. The producer, FRIEDRICH SCHRAMM, has treated it with simplicity and dignity, understanding that in dealing with a conception so huge and elemental as this nothing must stand in the way of the onward flow of the music. The orchestra under KARL RANKL rises quite wonderfully to the occasion, though its tone lacks depth and colour. The rôle of *King Mark* is nobly and beautifully sung by NORMAN WALKER, and the *Kurwenal* and *Brangane* of HANS HOTTER and CONSTANCE SHACKLOCK are equally good.

There is also an excellent and imaginative new production of *Il Trovatore* at Sadler's Wells, which brings to the forefront a talented newcomer, JOYCE GARTSIDE, as *Leonora*. This is a performance that is both good

to look at (for which we have to thank JOHN MOODY) and good to hear. Any English production of *Il Trovatore* will be less red in tooth and claw than VERDI intended, but this one is little the worse for that. Nobody ever understood the plot anyway.

Last but not least, opera-lovers have had an opportunity also of hearing a concert performance under RICHARD AUSTIN of a rarely-performed and utterly delightful pastoral opera—HANDEL's *Acis and Galatea*. Here NORMAN WALKER was the giant *Polyphemus* "melting, raging, burning" with love for the nymph *Galatea*, laying aside his pine-tree walking-stick to make a pipe, and tramping about in orchestral chords in a most ferocious manner. To hear him preparing to hurl a rock at *Acis*, adjuring him the while not to complain, was the greatest fun. ELSIE MORISON was a charming *Galatea* and DAVID LLOYD a melodious *Acis*. The NEW ERA CONCERT SOCIETY was responsible for this delightful performance.

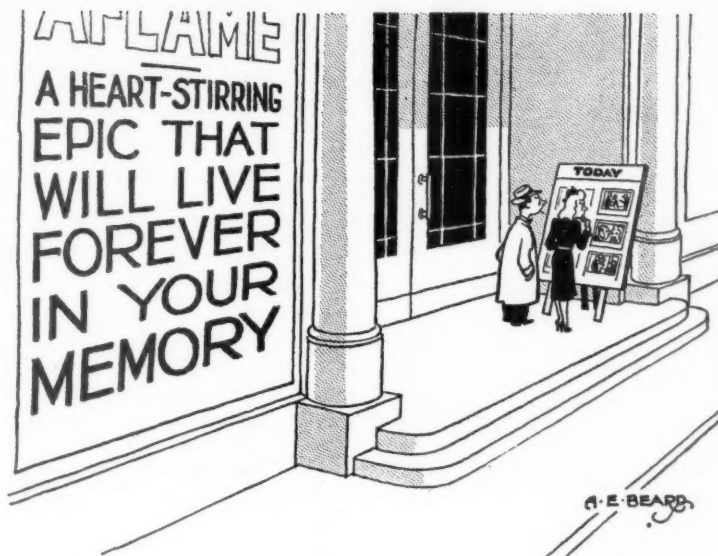
D. C. B.

Please Excuse Typing.

If you have ever, like me,
Missed the "r" and hit the "t,"
Addressing some fat blister
As "Mt." instead of "Mr.,"
I trust you left it unamended?

Splendid.

J. B. B.



"I've a sort of half-feeling we've seen it."



"Which Budget are your prices pre?"

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

François Villon

APART from a recurrent inability to decide whether France in the fifteenth century was extremely like the world of to-day or totally dissimilar from it, Miss CECILY MACKWORTH has written a clear, well-balanced and perceptive study of *François Villon* (WESTHOUSE, 9/6), a poet who has been much romanticized by writers anxious to dissociate themselves from bourgeois standards and figure as blood-brothers to an apache of genius. Villon's early years were passed in a Paris ruined by the Hundred Years War and the feud between the Armagnacs and Burgundians. His uncle, however, a member of a rich religious community, managed to live there comfortably enough, untroubled by the pickpockets and beggars who formed the bulk of the population. He had adopted Villon, treated him well and hoped that he would make a career in the Church. But Villon, though he passed his examinations, was prevented both by his genius and by what was childish and undeveloped in him from settling down to a regular existence. When he was twenty-three he killed a priest, and thenceforward, until he disappears from history at the age of thirty-one, lived a precarious and largely criminal life. Miss MACKWORTH does not accept the legendary Villon, the reckless light-hearted rascal pictured by Rabelais as Panurge. She sees him as "a jealous, bitter man, terribly conscious of his physical ugliness, his poverty and his lowly origins," completely immature as a human being, but with a wonderful power of seeing himself and his circumstances exactly as they were.

H. K.

Mecca of Musicians

Musical Vienna, which witnessed the encounter of Italian and Teuton, Classic and Romantic—and of all four with that particular branch of baroque art which fathered

grand opera, deserves a monograph to itself. In *The Golden Age of Vienna* (PARRISH, 6/-) Mr. HANS GAL of Edinburgh University traces the Austrian capital's composers from Gluck to Schubert; and the theory that a rich seed-bed of talent is needed to produce genius receives as striking a confirmation as you could get outside the London of Shakespeare. Mozart's Vienna is a comparable peak. Haydn proclaimed young Mozart the greatest composer he had ever met; and both Haydn and Mozart were kept alive (however ignominiously) by the Hapsburgs and their nobles. The post-Revolution bourgeoisie were so little aware of cultural claims that Schubert, the least socially exigent of his great generation, was the least regarded. With Schubert's death, Germany took over; and Austria had turned to Donizetti when the visiting Schumann discovered Schubert's "Symphony in C." Thus ends an unrivalled epoch, handled with a rare blend of discernment and gusto. Possibly a dramatist pure and simple would question Mr. GAL's assertion that characters have been the success of all opera. Of how many such characters can you say, as Beethoven said of Weber's "Caspar," "that fellow stands like a house."

H. P. E.

Under the Nazis

Preserved through the courageous loyalty of the writer's family, *The Von Hassell Diaries, 1938-1944* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 15/-), in their day-to-day record of his movements about Germany, ostensibly doing no more than deliver innocuous lectures on economics, seem to be a rather ordinary war-time narrative. There is piquancy, rather enhanced than otherwise by the American idiom of the translation, in their informed inside comment on the crazy working of the Hitler-Ribbentrop political machine, but this is only of secondary interest, for beneath a tale of cleverly contrived meetings and discussions is the history of a sustained effort to forward a desperate secret project. To the writer, a proud and honest gentleman, an aristocrat, former ambassador to Rome, the Nazi domination was a tragedy of black darkness, horrible in the imbecility of its plans for world conquest, in its throwing away of chances for a reasonable peace, most of all in its degradation and destruction of all moral values. Year after year he failed to bring to the point of final resolution those highly placed generals who agreed and agreed in words, but always, under the fear of the Gestapo and the hypnotism of mad Hitler, fell back from the act of revolt that they alone could accomplish, and this recurrent disappointment foreshadows that ultimate disaster to which these chapters poignantly move on. The culmination comes in the bomb attack on the chief gangster in July 1944, a plot that inevitably just fell short of success. Von Hassell faced the penalty he had foreseen in a manner worthy of the best in his nation's history.

C. C. P.

Thérèse

Thérèse, the second volume of Mr. GERARD HOPKINS'S admirable translation of the novels of M. François Mauriac (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 10/6), includes "Thérèse Desqueyroux" and "The End of the Night," linked by two short stories. Mauriac is not a lovable novelist, any more than Dostoevsky, nor, despite his limpidity and technical resource, is he an easy one; for the non-Catholic at times he is baffling. Yet, while he ruthlessly forces the reader to learn and to grow he makes the process exciting and satisfying, if painful. The concentration of pity, terror and knowledge in these scenes from the life of a woman tortured

by her power to destroy burns but purifies. Her creator describes Thérèse as "an example of that power, granted to all human beings—no matter how much they may seem to be the slaves of a hostile fate—of saying 'No' to the law which beats them down." Mauriac seems at home everywhere, from the desolate sands and swamps of the pine-covered Landes to the seedy muddle of an ageing outcast's Paris, from the dead pressure of the Provincial Family to the endless variations of love and hate and the warped no-man's-land in the human soul. Economically and without fuss he smoothly creates new characters and new situations: the conflict is eternal, the incidents novel. Mauriac avoids the stewiness of so much modern fiction and makes most living novelists seem thin, limited, sketchy and diffuse.

R. G. G. P.

Wings and Hackles

Your old-fashioned fisherman would choose, when he can, to approach the most peaceful sport on earth in the quietest and least hurried manner. The stroll down to the river is for him an added pleasure tinged deliciously with leisurely anticipation. Mr. TERENCE HORSLEY, however, being of the generation that climbs into an aircraft as naturally as its elders climb into their waders, finds a positive kick in casting a fly on distant water only a few hours after taking off from London. He writes equally happily about both sports, and succeeds surprisingly in marrying their joys. During the war his job took him often all over Britain, but especially to Scotland, and his brief-case was seldom unaccompanied in the cockpit by a rod. *Fishing and Flying* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 12/6) is mainly about this period, though one of its most attractive chapters tells of the nursing of a fouled, forgotten stream into a small paradise full of thriving trout. The salmon and both its junior cousins, and ways to defeat them; shrewd and witty portraits of honest anglers, poachers of course included; the lyric thrill of seeing quickly changing landscape from the air; and beautiful descriptions of wild country—these are the stuff of a book which, delightfully illustrated by Mr. C. F. TUNNICLIFFE, can be heartily recommended. Its author has the unusual gift of conveying the poetic side of fishing—and flying—without giving the impression that he is doing reverence to some obscure religion.

E. O. D. K.

Apocalyptic Painter

Aspiring to become a sort of pictorial Milton, John Martin (DUCKWORTH, 25/-) is perhaps more appositely compared to his friend and admirer "Satan" Montgomery. The "weight of awfulness" that Martin's surviving canvases display—"The Eve of the Deluge," "Belshazzar's Feast" and so forth—has not endeared him to perceptive critics. But his bituminous notion of the sublime having acquired a period interest during the last ten years, there is a demand for his (mainly architectural and landscape) renderings of foxy-red and lamp-black phantasmagoria. His life, deeply moving in its eccentricity, pathos, courage and cruel circumstances, is admirably retold by Mr. THOMAS BALSTON, already the biographer of John's mad brother William, the incendiary of York Minster. The metamorphosis of a poor sign-and-china-painter into a rival of Academicians is less easy to follow—possibly for want of data?—than the painter's transition to mezzotint which is told with technical relish. Martin's scientific enterprises—he had a touch of Leonardo about him—included a campaign against "excrementitious matter" in the Thames and the invention of a safety-lamp

for miners. His circle was as multifarious as his talents. Tom Hood and Loudon the gardener dined together at his table; and William IV, introduced to his "Fall of Nineveh," shook hands and said "How pretty!"

H. F. E.

Spies

It is obvious that an ordinary reviewer cannot pretend to assess at its true value a book which deals with the inside history of international espionage. All he can do is to say that his sense of probability has or has not been shocked by the book under notice. On the whole, so far as the present reviewer is concerned, Mr. E. H. COOKRIDGE's *Secrets of the British Secret Service* (SAMPSON LOW, 15/-) does not flagrantly outrage likelihood. It is carelessly written, and the author's trite phraseology invests his narrative throughout with a persistent, if faint, air of unreality. But he is always exciting, and his book may be read as fiction by those who do not take to it as fact. In "The Stolen Code" he narrates how a young American at the Embassy in London kept the Germans supplied with all the information sent by the British Government to the States in the first year of the war. In "Canaris" he outlines the career of the famous German spy who became one of Mata Hari's lovers and betrayed her to the British Secret Service when she had ceased to be useful to the German. In other chapters he deals with Papen's activities in the Middle East, with German spies on our South Coast, and with German espionage in Lisbon and Ireland.

H. K.

M. LEO VAN PUYVELDE has devoted twenty-five years to the study of Rubens, and in *The Sketches of Rubens* (KEGAN PAUL, 2 gns.) his aim is to show the master "in the act of creation." A catalogue raisonné of the one hundred and four sketches reproduced makes this an invaluable work for students.



"I've given up begging 'em and explaining. I suppose they've got to get to work and they just don't want to take no chances."



"... and if I'm not here to let you in, Bill, you'll find the key under the mat."

This Year of Grace

IT would be peculiarly acceptable, especially in Gloucestershire, if Gloucestershire were to win the County Cricket Championship in the forthcoming season, for this summer sees the centenary of the birth of Dr. W. G. Grace, who was born on 18th July, 1848, for which figures I am indebted to *Wisden*. And Gloucestershire has not reached the ultimate heights since the doubtless glorious season of 1877, although most Gloucestershire men have worked out somewhat intricate methods of their own of reckoning the County Championship, and are able to prove that if their system—a fresh one every year—had been adopted by the M.C.C., Gloucestershire would have been top of the table every season for the past twenty years. These systems are extremely ingenious, if jesuitical, examples of mathematics, points being awarded for such niceties as a declaration, for “going for the runs,” W. R. Hammond’s batting-average, and for general sporting spirit.

By the way, I think I am right in claiming that Mrs. H. M. Grace, the

mother of W. G., is the only woman ever to “make” the austere masculine pages of *Wisden*. Her brief biographical note is to be found in the 1947 Almanack, amid ten other Graces, all strictly male. Has she been included to make up the eleven?

The incomparable successes of Grace—of W. G., I mean, not of Mrs. H. M., Alfred, Alfred H., C. B., E. M., Edgar M., G. F., H. M., Henry, or W. G. jun.—are not easy to understand, for he seems to have had a pretty lean time in local cricket in the county. A considerable proportion of Gloucestershire’s present population consists of old men who clearly remember once clean-bowling Grace for a duck. Sometimes they did it as boys, sometimes as mere babes. Quite often they went in to bat after that and hit his first ball for six as well. Grace always congratulated them warmly. Myself, I never met anybody who played against Grace who didn’t clean-bowl him first ball. It must have been disheartening for the Old Man. He knew before he went out to bat that, by the law of averages, there was a

boy out there who was going to get his stumps with his first ball. It was just as well he entered the wider field of representative cricket. He would never have made a name for himself in village cricket.

Notwithstanding his dismal record locally, W. G. Grace is naturally the automatic choice for captain when we in Gloucestershire get down to the serious business of selecting an All-Time England Eleven. (The surest way to start friction with a Gloucesterian is to omit Walter Hammond from your own All-Time England Eleven, a heresy occasionally committed by alien infidels. It is as bad as leaving Tom Voce out of an All-Time England Fifteen. Each is an even deadlier insult to a Forest of Dean man than the artless question: Who killed the bear? It is a long time now since the Foresters put to death a showman’s dancing-bear, under the impression it was a morose and curmudgeonly foreigner, but the memory still rankles.)

Our customary All-Time England Eleven has for its backbone W. G.

Grace, G. L. Jessop, W. R. Hammond, A. E. Dipper, C. J. Barnett, C. W. L. Parker and T. W. Goddard. The minor places in the team we fill from other counties.

My own closest connection with Gloucestershire county cricket—if you except the occasion when I daringly asked R. A. Sinfield the time—came as a boy when, watching rapturously in the stand at the Cheltenham Festival, I was suddenly galvanized into a sitting jump just in time to get out of the way of one of Hammond's sixes which came crashing down exactly where I'd been sitting. (To my deep annoyance a horrid little girl in pink pounced on the ball, before I'd recovered myself, and threw it back—under-arm, too!) That night, after I'd gone to bed, I caught that ball in seven different ways, and B. H. Lyon, then the county skipper, came running over to me from the pavilion to ask my name.

From that time on I played regularly for Gloucestershire when I was in bed. I opened with Dipper for a while, until they found my free-scoring

methods had more scope if I went in fifth wicket down. Even so, my defence could always be relied on when things looked bad, and sometimes they used to send me in early on a sticky wicket to stay there until it dried. More than once it was my privilege to go in before Hammond and take the shine off the ball for him. "Tate's making them fizz to-day" I would warn him (Maurice Tate was shaking his head at me in admiration and despair). "I'll keep his bowling to myself for a bit, if you like." "Jolly decent of you, young 'un," Hammond would say gratefully. "Oh, rot, Wally!" I would answer.

What really inspired me was when I had been watching Gloucestershire beaten taking the fourth innings. At such times I could hardly wait to get to bed before putting myself into the team and playing that fourth innings over again. I liked to go in last, just as people were leaving the ground, and complete my whirlwind century with the winning hit. "Don't mind if I pinch the bowling, do you?" I'd say apologetically to Tom Goddard as we

met in mid-wicket to pat the pitch. "It just happens I'm rather seeing 'em to-day."

Once, I am sorry to say, I stole an innings that was really Hammond's (not out 104 *v.* Middlesex, B. H. Lyon declaring with a lead of 1). But I didn't enjoy it. I lay awake most of the night, tormented by my conscience, and gave it back to him about 4 A.M.

I was never much of a bowler, but I think I was worth my place in the field. Parker, that great slow left-hander, always insisted on having me in the slips. "He's worth two wickets an innings to me," he told Lyon. Lyon was always on to me to cultivate my slow leg-spinners, but I used to laugh and shake my head. "They're just lucky, that's all," I said modestly, clapping his shoulder.

I never did nearly so well in actual Saturday afternoon games with the village second eleven. In this respect my cricket career bears a striking similarity to that of W. G. Grace. Ah me, happy days! Or, rather, happy nights.

More Sporting Notes from Paris

I AM not sure exactly when I agreed to bring back a darts-board and a shove-ha'penny board to Mme. Boulot's from England. To tell the truth, I can't remember doing so at all: but while I was in London I discovered a note in my diary consisting of the simple words "Darts and shove $\frac{1}{2}$ d. brd. Mme. B." So I did the decent thing.

The trouble began at Victoria. A sad-eyed young man suddenly materialized from that rather sinister quarter near platform 13 and said "May I have a look at that, sir?" I began to tremble, as I always do when accosted by Authority. The young man fingered the parcel, which admittedly did look rather odd, and being anxious to make him look happier I undid it, with hands that shook slightly.

"Darts-board, eh? And a shove-ha'penny-board, eh?" The young man looked sadder than ever, and my porter looked at me rather sharply, then turned away, scratched his ear, and gazed at platform 13 as if it had kicked him.

I began to perspire. I said "Just taking them back to some friends in Paris." The young man didn't actually cry, but he looked very near it.

"I don't know that you'll get them

much farther than Calais," he said miserably.

I almost sobbed with relief.

"Then you'll let me . . ."

"Oh, yes," sighed the young man. "It's not *here*—it's the other side I'm thinking about." He turned away hopelessly.

The porter gave Platform 13 a final nasty look and said "We'll 'ave to see if we can get it in the van. You won't get it in the carriage, not in the carriage you won't get it."

We got it in the van, but rather to my sorrow it reappeared in the Customs shed at Calais.

I found three officials with heavy moustaches standing round it when I arrived. The fact that they had heavy moustaches is not in itself important—I mention it because everything about them looked heavy and forbidding.

One said "What is it, these machines there?"

"Monsieur, they are games to be played indoors."

"*Le clock-golf*?" one of his colleagues suggested helpfully.

"Not precisely *le clock-golf*," I replied, wishing I were back at Victoria. "One is a game played with small arrows, and—"

"Arrows?" interrupted the third official sharply. "One has not averted

you that the drawing of bows in France demands a special permit, under Section quatorze bis?"

"The Customs Duty on lethal weapons, moreover, is exceptionally high," said No. 1.

"Owing to the recent devaluation of the franc," added No. 2.

I wiped my brow.

"Messieurs," I pleaded, "the arrows of which I speak are small, and are thrown with the hand, at a small board."

Light dawned in three minds simultaneously.

"La Flèche?" they cried eagerly.

I nodded gravely, though frankly the word is not one which Mr. Halliday—who used to take the Upper Fifth—even mentioned.

We passed on to the shove-ha'penny board. "Pousse-sou," was the nearest I could get to a translation, and it was necessary to give a practical demonstration.

By the time the darts-board had been taken down from one of the walls of the *Chef de Gare's* office, and the shove-ha'penny board retrieved from that of the *Sous-Chef de Gare*, the Paris train had left some hours previously.

However, my Customs Duty was reduced from 12,813 francs to 813 francs.

Science Revisited.

I SHOULD have known better than to tackle Physics at my time of life. Thirty years ago it would have been easy. If I had paid some slight attention to old Webbley I should soon have finished with the subject once and for all. I should have accepted everything uncritically, unemotionally. Schoolboys take the wonders of Physics, in their stride along with the marvels of Chemistry, Mathematics, Geography and the rest. They couldn't take them any other way and remain sane, healthy schoolboys.

I should have known better . . . and now I sit here wondering whether I shall ever be normal again. It was only last week that I read *The Bases of Modern Physics*, but it feels as though I've been living in an expanding universe for years. I used to see things as they *appeared*, as conventional manifestations of physical phenomena. Now I see them as they *really* are. And it is horrible. Horrible!

Take that vase over in the corner. How long has its light taken to reach me? What fraction of a light-year? "That vase over in the corner!"—that's a good one, that is. How do I know it's in the corner! I'm not seeing the vase—I'm seeing the light that started from it on its journey to me sometime in the past. I don't know *when* exactly (I should need mathematics to work it out, and I

know better now, thank heavens, than to tackle mathematics at my time of life), but it must be some measurable period.

Once you get tied up with Physics like this life becomes unbearable. You see a book on your shelves, and as you reach for it your hand is arrested by a sudden transfixing fear. Suppose the book isn't there? Suppose that all you're seeing is a ghost-book—the light from a book put there x light-years ago and subsequently borrowed. A hollow, rattling laugh escapes from your throat, but you are still afraid. You close your eyes and plunge for the shelf. Yes, the book is still there! Are you quite sure? Nothing would make you look at its title—just in case.

You turn away and open your eyes. Outside in the garden the trees are bare under the vertical rain. All is peace. But once more the engine of your mind begins to race. Are those trees really bare? Are they indeed what they seem? You resist the temptation to rush into the rain like some mad thing. You evolve a scheme that will put the household (and the neighbours, perhaps) right off the scent. "I think I'll just go and prune the elm tree," you announce. "Prune the elm tree?" they say. "In this weather?" "Why, yes," you say, shaking in every limb, "I've just been reading that this is the very moment for it."

Outside there in the rain with your saw you feel slightly better. Nervous and excited, but more hopeful. You know that they are all watching in amazement from the window, so you make subtle movements as though you were calculating the angle of prune or something. Then, very cautiously, you climb the tree and feel about for the leaves. Are they there? No? Then your mathematics must be at fault. Yes, that's it. They always are . . .

I sit here expanding steadily. The whole universe is expanding steadily, and everybody in it. I read that too. But I don't *notice* these changes because everything, including my field of vision, is expanding at the same rate. I'm aware of it though. Sometimes I even think I can hear things expanding differentially. I have asked lots of people to listen to my hat, but they just laugh and say that all they can hear is the tide coming in. What is the coefficient of expansion of a hat anyway?

Then there are atoms and molecules. You get those in Physics, too. Oddly enough the atoms don't worry me very much because . . . I'm sorry, d'you mind going back to the expanding universe for a moment—there's something I've just remembered. Look at this article. Can't you feel that it too is expanding? Put your ear right to it. Now! What can you hear? Hod.

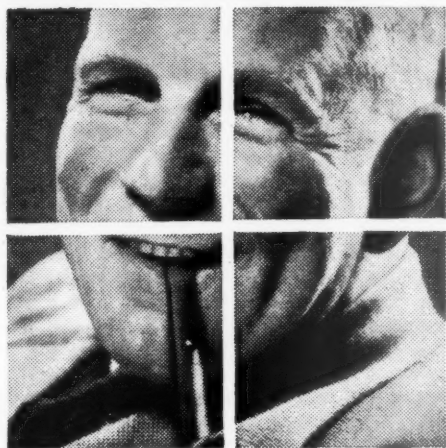


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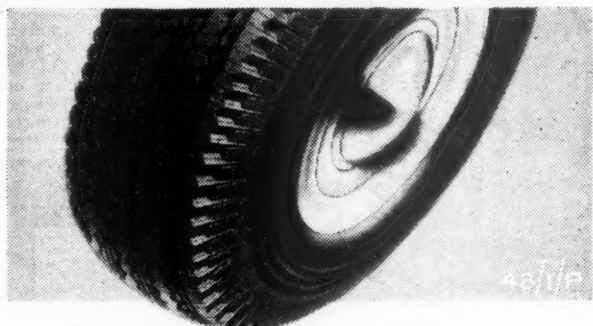
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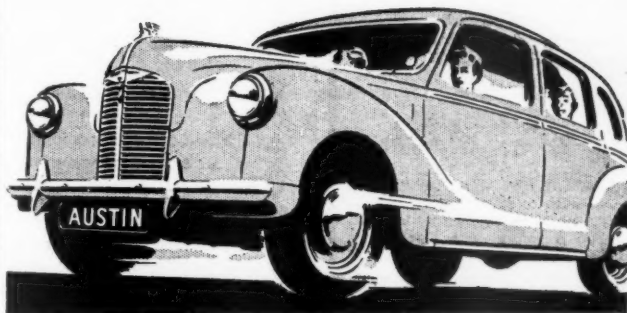
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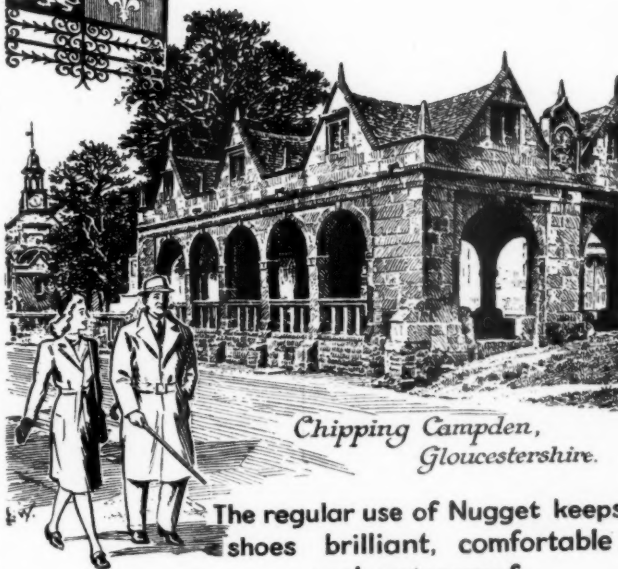
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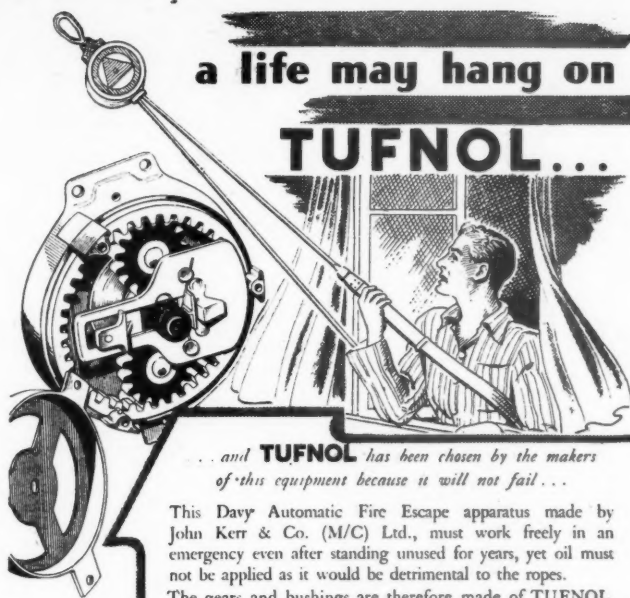
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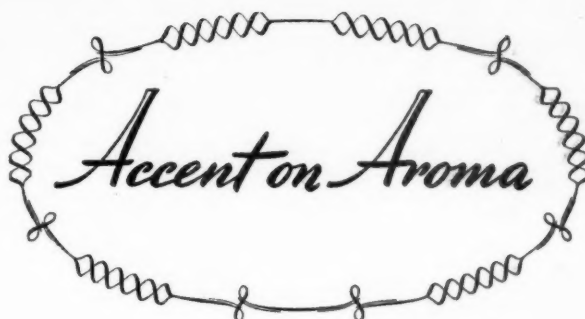
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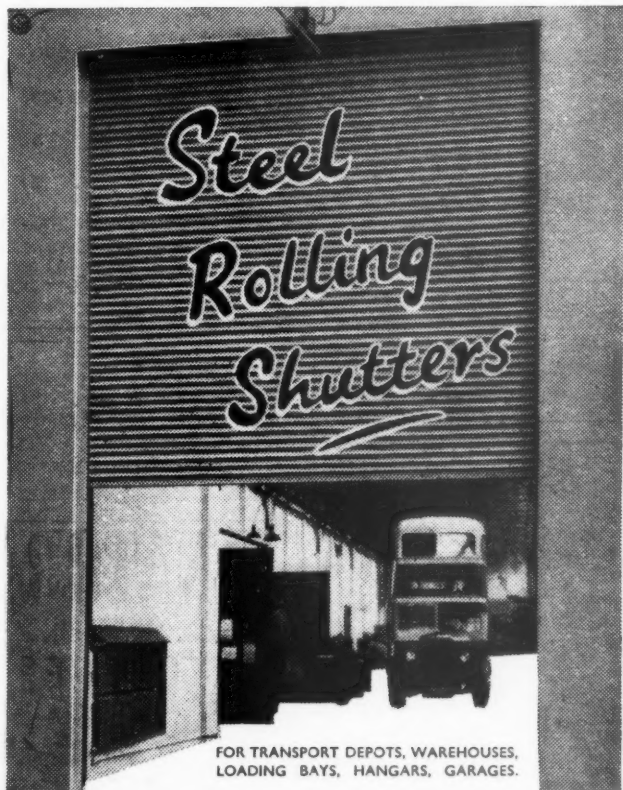
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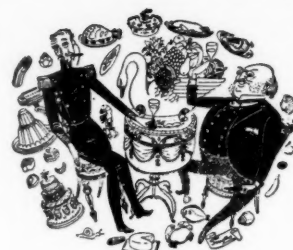
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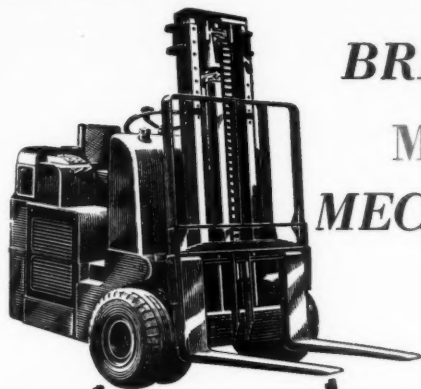


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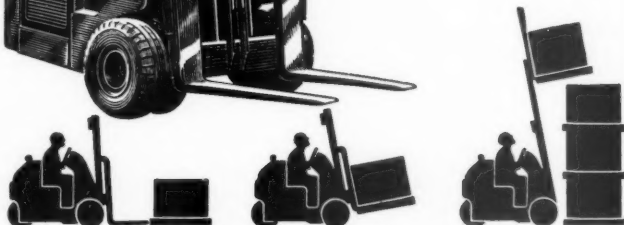
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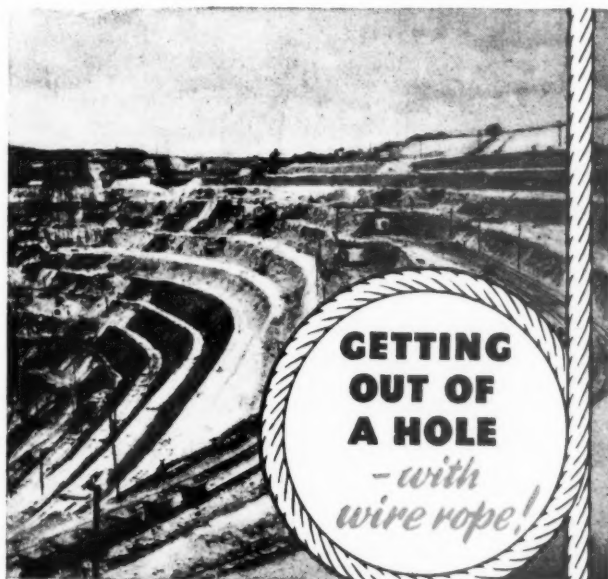
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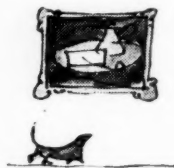
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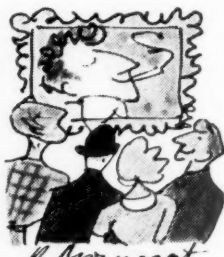
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Mere Technicolor



ABDULL...

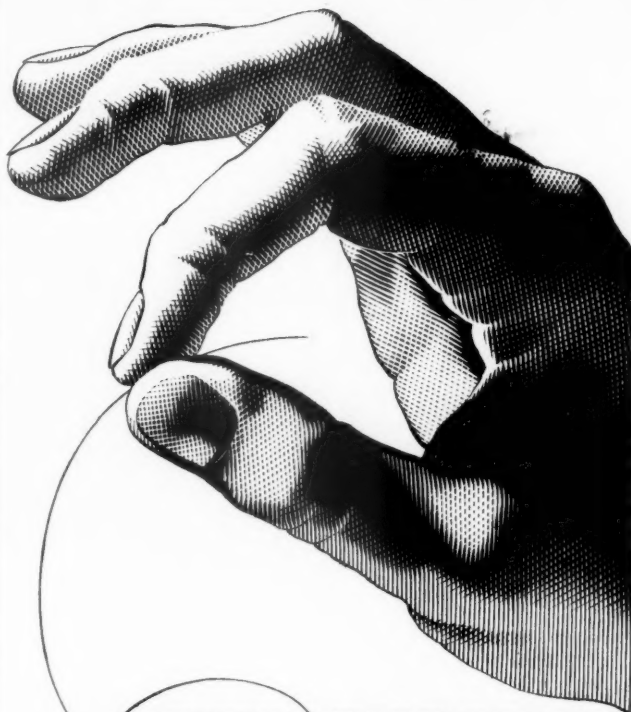


A(h), masterly!

ABDULLA

No. 7 'Virginia' Cigarettes 20 for 3/8

ALSO Abdulla Turkish and Egyptian



THIS EXPORT'S PRACTICALLY INVISIBLE

Accles & Pollock have made a steel tube so fine that a ton of it would go twice round the world. In consideration of the trouble this would cause to international shipping and school-boys' arithmetic, Accles & Pollock have decided to concentrate on hypodermic needle tubing instead. This is not quite so small as the other tubing, but its extreme precision and its British dependability bring in a lot of hard currency from hard-headed business men all over the world.

ACCLES & POLLOCK

Makers & manipulators of seamless tubes in stainless and other steels

OLDBURY · BIRMINGHAM

A  COMPANY